

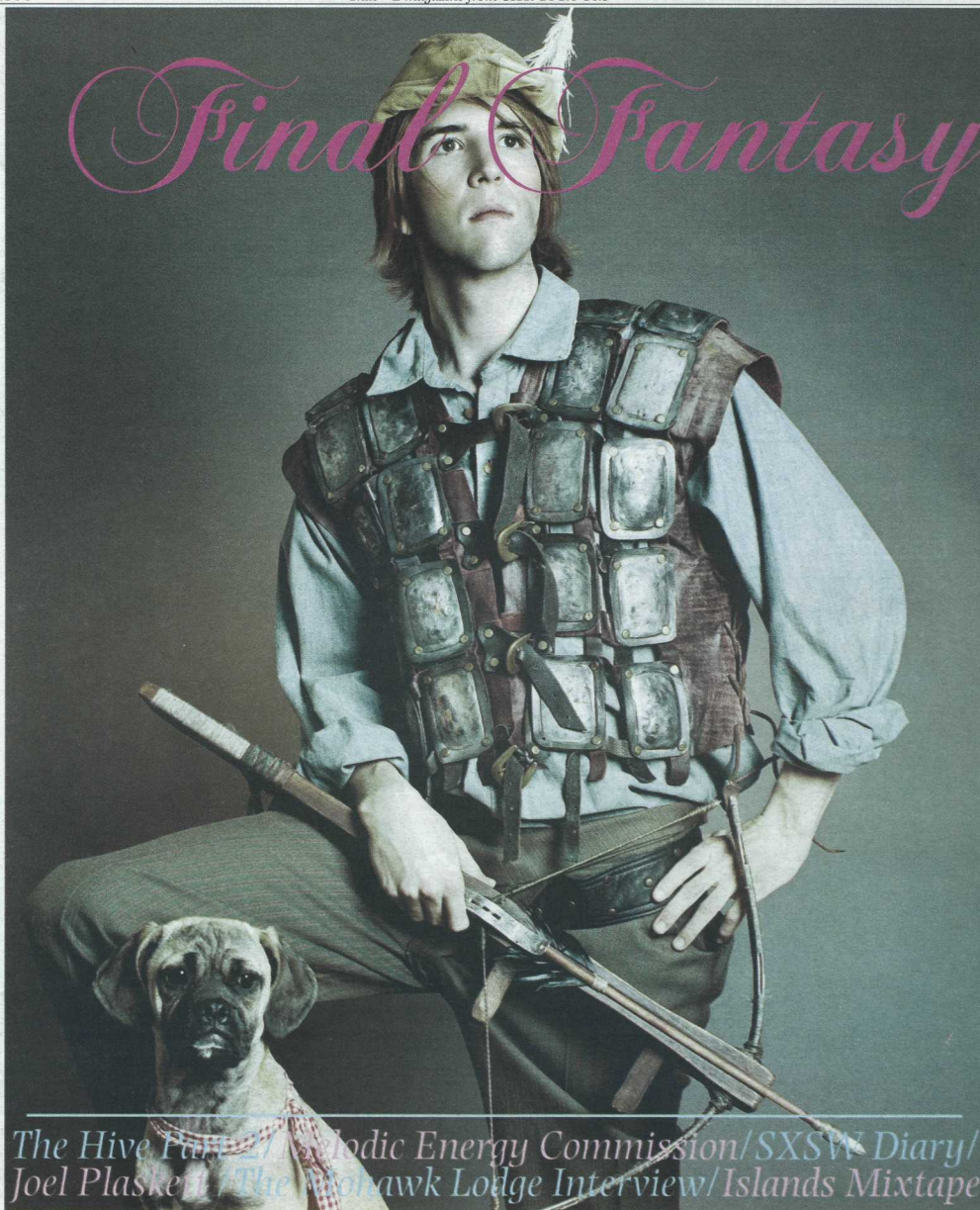
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May 2006

That +2 magazine from CTR 101.9 FM

Free

Final Fantasy



The Hive Part 2 / Echodic Energy Commission / SXSW Diary /
Joel Plaskette / The Mohawk Lodge Interview / Islands Mixtape

MAY 5

JOEL PLASKETT
EMERGENCY



MATTHEWS
+ EL TORPEDO

with special guest
MATTHEW BARBER

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COMMODORE BALLROOM

JOHN BROWN'S BODY

PRESSURE POINTS



MAY 10
RICHARD'S ON RICHARDS

MAY 17

The
Concretes

with guest New Buffalo

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RICHARD'S ON RICHARDS

MAY 13

STARLIGHT
MINTS

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS
dios (malos)
THE OCTOPUS
PROJECT

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JULIA AND SCRATCH

RICHARD'S ON RICHARDS

MAY 17

THE STROKES



GENERAL ADMISSION
TICKETS ALSO AT
JULIA AND SCRATCH
ALL AGES
EDGEWATER STAGE AT PLAZA OF NATIONS



NEW
AMSTERDAMS

WITH
THE LASHES
& CASTLE PROJECT

MAY 24
RICHARD'S ON RICHARDS

TICKETS ALSO AT JULIA AND SCRATCH

MAY 25



CONSTANTINES

WITH
BLOOD MERIDIAN
AND
CHAD VANGAALAN

TICKETS ALSO AT JULIA
SCRATCH, RED CAT

RICHARD'S ON RICHARDS

ALKALINE TRIO



WITH SPECIAL GUESTS
LAURENCE JARAS
AND THE BLACK MARIA

MAY 28
CROATIAN CULTURAL
CENTRE

ALL AGES
TICKETS ALSO AT JULIA AND SCRATCH

SATURDAY JUNE 3

THE CHARLATANS IN
SIMPLICIO



DOORS 8PM, SHOW 9PM

COMMODORE BALLROOM

JUNE 4

BOB
SCHNEIDER



TICKETS ALSO AT JULIA AND SCRATCH

RICHARD'S ON RICHARDS

JUNE 5

boy
kill
boy



DOORS 8PM, SHOW 9PM

COMMODORE BALLROOM

JUNE 5

ITS CLAYPOOL
OF WHALES AND WOE TOUR



DOORS 8PM, SHOW 9PM

COMMODORE BALLROOM

JUNE 5

O.A.R.



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YAVIER RUDD

WITH SPECIAL GUEST
RIDLEY BENT

FRIDAY JUNE 2
MALIKIN BOWL
STANLEY PARK

GENERAL ADMISSION LAWN

THE KIM ROBOT

SATURDAY JULY 1
CROATIAN CULTURAL CENTRE

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HEAT

THROWBACK
HORRORPOPS

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IN FLAMES
TRIVIUM
CANNIBAL CORPSE
TERROR
The Black Dahlia Murder
Behemoth
CHARIOT
B3B
EVERGREEN
TERFACE

PNE FORUM
AUGUST 10
GENERAL ADMISSION
TICKETS ALSO
AT SCRATCH RECORDS

DOORS 8PM, SHOW 9PM
TICKETS ALSO AT SCRATCH RECORDS

UPCOMING SHOWS

MAY 8
JEFF MARTIN
COMMODORE BALLROOM

MAY 18
THE CULT
EDGEWATER STAGE AT PLAZA OF NATIONS

MAY 21
CHICAGO IN THE HOUSE
COMMODORE BALLROOM

MAY 28
SEETHER
COMMODORE BALLROOM

JUNE 4
BRIGHT EYES
MALIKIN BOWL, STANLEY PARK

JUNE 16
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May 2006

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THE GENTLE ART OF EDITING

After the arrival of Rockin' Ruby last month, this column is in danger of devolving into the print version of The Learning Channel's 'A Baby Story,' but I just can't resist making the announcement: I am now the glowing uncle of a brand new baby, Madeline Raven Linton—in print already, and not yet a week old. I hadn't expected to meet her for another month, but my sister was struck down with some pregnancy complications that demanded immediate uterus evacuation. My family anxiously gathered around a hospital bed in Seattle for several days, waiting for the labour-inducing hormones to do their job, but Madeline was just not interested in existing yet. Finally the magical and mysterious (not to mention hideously painful) process took hold, and my wee niece was expelled into the world just as Bob Marley's 'Exodus' came on the stereo. For real, it was purely coincidental. Now I know Bob's music is the great adhesive that holds humankind together, but seriously, when did he get the power to call infants forth from the womb?

Speaking of uncanny powers of conjuration, this month's feature story has got me thinking a lot about *Dungeons & Dragons*. I was never allowed to play D&D when I was young, for fear that I would utterly lose touch with reality and remain trapped in my role-playing persona forever. It's kind of like when your parents told you to stop making that disgusting face before it got "frozen" in place, except roughly five times more bizarre. I can only imagine my mother's fearful vision of an innocent young David hideously transformed into Sagnor the Barbarian, dispatching neighbourhood children with a battleaxe in his insatiable quest for gold and experience points. Editing the Owen Pallett article opened an old wound, forcing me to recall a wasted childhood not spent dutifully studying necromancy, transmutation, evocation and the other D&D schools of magic. But when I think about my unfortunate friends that have fallen victim to the life-simulating vacuum of *World of Warcraft*, I'm pretty glad I didn't roll those perfidious dice when I was a kid.

One RPG that I did fall in love with (with parental authorization of course) was the *Final Fantasy* series, specifically the 3rd instalment (FF 6 in Japan). Pallett's musings on the game's co-existing themes of love and the apocalypse brought a rush of memories flooding back, of late nights spent levelling up and wading through the storyline's overwhelming pathos. In honour of that marvellous game we present *Final Fantasy* on our front page, where Owen Pallett has the distinction of being the first human to grace the cover in quite some time. We're hoping to appeal to a whole new demographic that likes magazines about people and music rather than rocking chairs and mittens. If you're one of those intrepid readers, don't be dissuaded by my role-playing geekery—read on!

David Ravensbergen, Editor

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Junior the Lion was born in the African Lion Safari near Oakville, Ontario, before moving to a farm in Manitoba with his owner Henry. Henry went on to become the proprietor of Nuffy's Gourmet Donuts on Bridgeport Road in Richmond. One day Henry drove up to Fraser and Broadway to the One Love Café with his beloved Junior, now dead and stuffed. Henry's friend Ken, who named the One Love Café to symbolize his love for his wife, his mother, Bob Marley's song and "the love between us all, as we are all one," was looking for a new logo for his restaurant: something Canadian yet exotic. When Henry drove up with his fierce and proud stuffed lion, Ken thought to himself, "this is it!" On the 9th day of the 9th month of 1999, the newly revamped Lion's Den was born. The story telling that goes on in this fine establishment is only one of its eccentric charms.

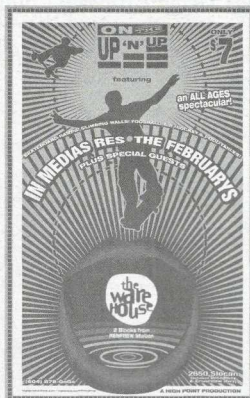
Fellow diner Caelie and I met outside and entered a hard-to-open yellow door at the top of some green and red steps. There are two knobs on the door, so make sure you use the bottom one to avoid confusion. We walked into a cozy, friendly small café with leopard print tables and chairs. A retro Pac-Man machine sat beside us, and reggae music played on. We started with the "Caribbean drink," which turned out to be ginger beer and a Jamaican grapefruit mixture. I imbibed the concoction, which was so gingery that it almost burned my mouth, but in a pleasurable way. Caelie enjoyed the equally delicious fruity Ting.

The yellow and red menus contain not only Caribbean and Japanese food but fusions of both, with some Cambodian thrown in. Our humungous meals totally contradicted their "small" description and five dollar price tags. Caelie had the Cambodian shrimp stir-fry with noodles, and I had the ackee and salt fish. Caelie's noodles were cooked in an unfamiliar way, leaving them slightly hard in a sesame sauce with succulent shrimp and a wide array of vegetables. The meal came with a disturbingly delicious plain iceberg lettuce and tomato salad smothered in

Italian dressing. My meal was mostly purple-tinged rice with kidney beans, with bright yellow ackee—a pear-shaped tropical fruit from the Caribbean with a warm and soft texture—and salt fish that wasn't actually so salty. The prices were totally reasonable and the meals turned out to be very filling indeed.

Ken came up to us and initiated a secret handshake with fists all on the same level, intoning "not above you or below you, but with you." He followed this cryptic greeting with a rendition of the Junior the Lion story for the entire restaurant to enjoy. Junko, Ken's wife, suggested the parfait for a post-storytime dessert. Delicious fruit explosions of fresh orange, apple, banana, rice krispies and vanilla ice cream topped with whipping cream and chocolate sauce. Sounds like a visit to the dentist and a stomach-ache, but it was amazingly good.

After ensuring that all his new customers signed the calendar (some days are indecipherable scribbles from all the first-timers), Ken said goodbye to his rasta and musician customers with "Have a creative evening!" And they responded with "Happy 4:20!" as that day was the 20th day of April. I ain't lying.



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Skip Jensen

Back from baby break (thanks Dave!) with an armful of wax, so let's get right to it. The Ciacuos are Italian tub-thumpers. The Mojomatics joining forces with the Ike and Tina of the new millennium, otherwise known as King Khan and BBQ, to spit out two R&B-laced ditties that bear uncanny resemblance to each other. Not for lack of originality, nay, but rather a case of divine artistic vision. "Walk On" bumps and grinds to the Bo Diddley beat, breaks into a gallop near the end and halts abruptly. Their take on Dee Clark's "Hey Little Girl" starts off nearly identical, but stays the course and still makes you want to shake it. You may be quick to dismiss, but don't let these guys pass you by—take this for what it is, a good party record. (Yakisakana Records, 51 Rue Renaudel, Rouen, France 76100 or www.yakisakana.fr).

Attendees to the **Dirtbombs/Black Lips** tour last month were treated to not only one of the finest fine rock and roll performances in recent memory, but a special commemorative split tour 7" was also on display for the musically savvy (read: geeky) for purchase. On it I was pleased to discover The Dirtbombs rendering a stellar version of Eurythmics' "Missionary Man," which has undoubtedly made Annie and Dave the subject of the latest VH1: *Where Are They Now?* series (ok, maybe not, but a man can dream can't he?). Anyway, it rocks out with their two drumkits out. The Black Lips patented "flower punk" is in full effect on the flip with a track called "Make It," which I originally mistook as "Naked." So it goes to show I should pay more attention to lyrics. A little bit country, a little bit rock and roll, but all Lips just the

same—snatch this up if you can, 'cuz once they're gone, they're gone. (no label info, sorry.)

Just when you thought the lupine fad was over, Sydney Australia's sons of Sabbath **Wolfmother** hit the ground running (for the bong), and deliver a seventies classic rock pastiche on their latest single "Mind's Eye," complete with Kansas-style keyboard breakdown, lead (Led?) heavy guitar and wrapped in a Frank Frazetta (**Molly Hatchet** fans know what I'm talking about) illustrated sleeve. The other track, "The Earth's Rotation Around The Sun," is a bit of a throwaway, as it's just an esoteric instrumental, but these guys seem to be on the verge of something big, as evidenced by their sold-out show scheduled for later this month. If you're one of the lucky ones, you'll witness greatness, or just another band with Wolf in their name. (Modular Records, www.modularpeople.com).

Not since the heyday of **The Mummies** and their epic "Whitecaps Pt. 1 & 2" has there been a band so bold as **The Christa Min** to use a whole seven inch for just one song, but that's exactly what these mysterious locals do with "The Devil And Tex Wilson." Structured around a hypnotic three chords (that for some reason brings **The Scientists** to mind), some eerie organ and occasional "vocals," the song actually grabs you by the scruff of the neck fairly quickly, and the flow of the tune rises and falls powerfully in all the right places. The real Christa Min would be proof, even if she only likes **Silksworn** and the **Seattle Mariners**. Artwork by the ever-so-humble **Kim Bragg** puts the cherry on this garage-blues sundae, so dig in! (available to

finer rekkid shops locally or at CM shows?).

A tale of two local labels to end this month's stabulation of all things turntable-friendly—Seeing Eye and La-Ti-Da Records are making the scene. The former are the new kids on the block with an eye for the underground, in this particular case Ottawa, Ontario punk'n'roll combo, **The Million Dollar Marxists**. Two new **Bomb Turks** in training cuts from these criminally under-appreciated carmen blast out the swamp with the likes of "I Don't Wanna Evolve" and "Mystery O". Me like to smash! Me like to make loud noises with guitars! Me going nowhere with this! Me likey! (Seeing Eye Records, P.O. Box 88202 Chinatown Vancouver, BC Canada V6A 4A5, www.seeingeyerecords.com). The latter are still-fairly-new kids with a new release from one-man band extraordinaire **Skip Jensen**. Montreal's bastard offspring to **Hasil Adkins** and **Howlin' Wolf** lays down "Honey Child," "Too Far Gone" and "No Good Man Blues" with aplomb, showcasing his instrumental dexterity as well as his penchant for songs that hit hard and stay strong. You won't find these tracks on his recent full-length *Abscond*, so best find this clear-vinyl gem before they disappear. (La-Ti-Da Records, www.latidarecords.com).

Enough reading, now get out there and get these rekkids! Go! GO!

STRUT, FRET AND FLICKER

Penelope Mulligan

A Streetcar Named Desire
Ballet British Columbia
Queen Elizabeth Theatre
Thursday April 6

Choreographer John Alleyne creates movement so succulent that watching his company dance can be almost hypnotic. This wasn't enough, however, to compensate for the fact that his interpretation of Tennessee Williams' play felt decidedly off-beam. In choosing to make the piece a study of one of modern theatre's most elegantly messed-up characters, the Ballet BC Artistic Director may have given Simone Orlando the role of a lifetime—her *Blanche Dubois* is complex, compelling and danced to artistic and technical perfection—but he also sidestepped what is arguably the play's molten core.

Stanley Kowalski and his wife Stella share an animal attraction that should give any production of *Streetcar* an overwhelming sexual charge (the title, after all, comes from the couple's metaphor for fucking). Alas, there's no room for this relationship in Alleyne's busy version. Most noticeably, he commissions a story adaptation that fleshes out events from the past which are only tantalizingly alluded to in Williams' script: the closeted homosexuality of Blanche's young husband and his suicide after an exposed affair. The multiple flashbacks were unnecessarily distracting as they jostled with a present already loaded with more scenes than *The Nutcracker*.

Even more problematic was a crucial piece of casting. You can't just put a muscular guy in an undershirt and expect to get Stanley Kowalski. Though Donald Sales is a terrific dancer, it was telling that he was only impressive during solo passages, when relating to a partner wasn't an issue. In fact, Sales was singularly impervious to anyone else on stage. As for Courtney Richardson, her warm, richly sensual portrayal of Stella was wasted on him. In contrast, Edmond Kilpatrick was so plugged in as Blanche's gentlemanly love interest, Mitch, that there was provocative chemistry with anyone he came near. In his duets with Orlando, he seemed to be constantly challenging the self-deluding Blanche to be who she really was.

Kim Nielson's economical design consisted of a few strong set pieces that dominated the stage when needed, and Tobin Stokes' live jazz score was mostly a good fit. But the groundwork was never laid for the play's dramatic climax—Stanley's sexual violation of his sister-in-law—so, appropriately enough, it never really happened. Civilized foreplay on and around an oversized bed ended abruptly when Blanche

crawled underneath it like a child playing hide and seek. It was oddly stunted, but then so was her sexuality, and Orlando's rendering of the character was intriguing precisely because it kept her in a state of high anxiety. She was damaged and inconsolable, and in a weird way, her exquisite struggles would often threaten to pull the frustrating piece into some kind of focus. At one such moment, I decided that simply calling it "Blanche" would fix everything. On a gut level, though, I was longing for someone to holler "STELLA AAA".

THE PLUGHOLE

As no preview tapes were available before deadline, I'm flying blind this month and recommending a couple of films unseen. One packs serious pedigree and the other makes my antennae vibrate, so both are still good prospects.

Whether you have fantasies of becoming a war correspondent or just want to stay stoked as an engaged, enraged citizen of the world, *The Troubles We've Seen: A History of Journalism in Wartime* should be tugging at your sleeve. The 1994 British/French/German co-production only recently got a North American release, but its subject—the ethics of war zone reportage—shows no sign of losing relevance. The fact that it predates the recent glut of hot topic political documentaries could make it more interesting. Shot mainly in Sarajevo in 1993 during two trips made by director Marcel Ophüls (son of Max Ophüls, revered creator of such mid-20th century euromags as *The Lovers of Montparnasse* and *Lola Montès*), if you'll pardon the digression), the film intersperses siege footage with interviews whose high-profile subjects include journalists, philosophers and war criminals (Slobodan Milosevic should be a grimly interesting talking head). Humour and satire provide the leavening agents via vintage movie clips. The 224-minute experience is unlikely to contain any empty calories, but there will be a 15-minute break for pee, tea and stretching. *The Troubles We've Seen* plays **The Pacific Cinematheque** on May 17, 18 and 23 at 7:15pm.

I first learned of *Holden's* massive art project, *Trains of Winnipeg*, when one of his 14 short film poems aired on *Zed*. A visit to the website revealed that the film cycle component spans 40 years and is also accompanied by a book and an audio CD. Threaded together by the notion of a train journey and given sonic heft by Christine Fellows and members of *The Weakerthans*, the segments include as subjects murder, suburban madness, the grit and bang of Winnipeg's rail



yards and the filmmaker's brain-damaged brother, whose vocabulary shrank to nine words as the result of a stroke. I get the feeling that the Vancouver Island native has done something really important with all this and am glad that the Cinematheque is offering a big-screen chance to take a look. *Trains of Winnipeg: 14 Film Poems* plays May 31 and June 1 at 7:30pm.

CINEMA ASPIRANT

Allan MacInnis

Is cinema food for your soul, and is your soul hungry? Cinema Aspirant offers glimpses of gems to be rescued from the wreckage of your local video store.

PETER WATKINS AND PUNISHMENT PARK

Imagine this scenario for a film: right-wing Christian conservatives have seized control of the U.S. government, and anyone who criticizes their agenda or their unpopular war overseas is regarded as an enemy of the state. The civil rights of leftists and dissidents are suspended and they're herded into kangaroo courts, found guilty of treason, and given a choice between a lengthy prison term or enduring a 50-mile trek through a desert obstacle course, while national guardsmen and police-in-training hunt them down. During the tribunals, the dissidents hurl their protests against their government and its evil war on deaf ears—the conservatives accuse them of hating their country, and whatever they say only further convinces the tribunal that these are dangerous subversives. Communication fails to occur; polarization is terminal.

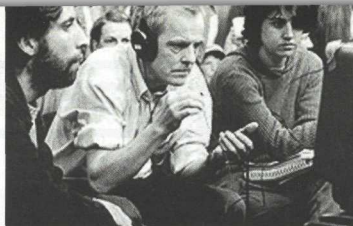
Did you imagine all that as happening in a contemporary setting? One certainly could, but the above is in fact the premise of a little-seen film from 1970, Peter Watkins' *Punishment Park*. Its release on DVD in 2005 was the first time most people—including devoted cinephiles such as myself—had heard of it. And its director, expatriate Brit Peter Watkins, is far from well-known. Because of Watkins' uncompromising commitment to his ideals and probing criticisms of mass audio-visual media, he has been branded a paranoid and ignored for most of his nearly 50 year career. Even devoted film geeks often know only one of his films, his confrontational pseudo-documentary about the probable effects of nuclear war, *The War Game* made in 1965—almost 20 years before *Threads* or *The Day After*. The *War Game* was produced and then buried by the BBC, when they realized just how horrifying a film he'd made. Watkins went on to make the rarely screened cult hit *Privilege* for Universal, which



played at last month's Big Smash festival (Universal have no plans to release it on DVD). Watkins left Britain soon thereafter, to seek a climate where his work would be more warmly received. He has since worked in Sweden, the USA, Denmark, Norway, France, and Canada: It was there, in 2003, that he met Oliver Groom, of the Toronto-based distribution company Project X. Thanks to Groom, at age 70, Peter Watkins—who now resides in Lithuania—may be finally finding an audience.

As of this writing, three major Watkins films are available on DVD through Project X: *Punishment Park*, *Edward Munch*, and *The Gladiators*. Groom says of *Punishment Park* that "many [viewers] are surprised at how effective and topical it still is and wonder how it has remained undiscovered for so long." Aspirants are urged to explore Watkins' other work on their own (note that Edward Munch was described by Ingmar Bergman as a "work of genius," and is one of the few "lives-of-the-artist" films that does justice to its subject matter).

Like many of Watkins' films, *Punishment Park* situates itself in a grey area between documentary and fiction filmmaking. As Watkins notes, "The young people in the film were radicals, and some of them had already been in prison for their beliefs." The views they express are largely their own, and much of their dialogue is improvised, as is that of the conservative tribunal members and police (many of whom were actual conservatives or former police). The premise of the film is based on actual law—the McCarran act, a "draconian U.S. legislation [which] provided for the setting-up of places of detention (in effect concentration camps) for those accused by the government of subversion." The formal aspects of the film also have much in common with documentary filmmaking: camerawoman Joan Churchill was told to "make it look like news footage," and Watkins



often had her jiggling her handheld 16mm camera to give the film a gritty authenticity. Interestingly, some audiences at the time believed they were watching actual events taking place. Watkins notes that "when Danish TV showed *Punishment Park*, the Danish press reacted in anger against the U.S. for having such an iniquitous system, then had to retract when they realized that the film was a constructed fiction.... Why the Danish press should have been surprised by this, I'm not sure. Since they should have been aware that all film and TV is constructed, that in many senses every audio-visual act is a fiction—including the evening news."

Prospective Project X releases include *The War Game* and *Culloden*, on one disc, followed by *The Freethinker*, based on the life of August Strindberg. Groom would also like to release Watkins' *The Journey*, a 1987 international production about the nuclear arms race, but since the logistics of preparing a 14 1/2 hour long for DVD release are somewhat complicated, he recommends we not "hold our breath." See <http://www.torontobits.com/pxd.htm> for more.

People interested in media complicity in frustrating participatory democracy, impoverishing public awareness, and promoting corporate and right-wing agendas are highly advised to explore Watkins' media statement online at <http://www.msnl.net/~pwatkins/>. Where he also writes at length about his films. I'll have more to say about *Punishment Park* at Blum on May 30th, where I'll be playing the DVD, followed by a discussion. *Punishment Park* is as intellectually exciting a film as you're likely to see this year.



SPECIES OF DISCORD

BY DAVID RAVENBERG



If you've had the misfortune of being subjected to Weird Al-inspired joke rapper MC Lars' recent abomination, *The Graduate*, you may have noticed that one track about the time machine. You know, the one where he tells Albert Einstein to throw his hands in the air, and drops hopelessly clumsy lines like "AD 33 maybe you would see me/Telling Jesus his friend Judas was untrustworthy." You'd think a Stanford-educated man intent on going back to 1388 to battle rap Chaucer would have a better grasp of rhyme and metre, but you'd be wrong. He dismisses some of my favourite Modernists, from Ezra Pound to Franz Kafka, boasting "I've got postmodernism" as some kind of disclaimer for his kindergarten cadences. But hey, that song "If I Had a Time Machine. That Would Be Fresh" sure did make me want to go back in time.

This month's journey into the nostalgia vortex (MC Lars isn't invited) takes us back to May 1991, the 100th issue of *Disorder*. The Hive and The Railway Club had best look out, because we've got yet another (historical) anniversary to celebrate. It seems like the centennial milestone should have been a joyous occasion, but a brief flip through the covers reveals otherwise. The first clue that something was amiss can be found in the "Dear Althead" section, an old letters to the editor feature dating back to the first issue. Since I inherited the reins of control in January, the lack of a letters section has seemed to me a grievous oversight. Without an avenue for reader feedback, our little

outpost at UBC could very well be pumping pages of unreadable tripe into the city, wasting trees and chafing minds without our knowledge. I don't really think this is the case, but like a good democracy, a healthy magazine should encourage dissent. Here's a sample of the not-so-nice things people had to say about *Disorder* 15 years ago, in spite of grandmama's advice:

You clumps with your criticisms of a scene that doesn't exist should save your ideas for chatter in the cafeteria. Stop printing this nonsense...Someone drive these poeticles from publishing.

This is the most vile, disgusting, confusing, hard to understand, opinionated, scary piece of publication I have ever laid eyes on.

What's happened to *Disorder*? I used to look forward to each issue. Now it's become nothing more than a force of habit, a habit I intend to break if this publication doesn't improve posthaste. The latest issue looks like it was thrown together for the sake of fulfilling the claim that you publish monthly. Not only was it dull and extremely pretentious, it was poorly designed and devoid of style.

The *Disorder* covers of the last year have progressively decreased in taste and judgment, to the point of convincing those unwary of its contents that it is a quasi-bourgeois sports rock-rag put together by tasteless, no-time-for-talent "students."

The spontaneous overflow of hatred isn't confined to the letters section. It seems 1991 was a troubled time for the magazine



staff as well, who were struggling to come to terms with the label of "alternative" music. Cries of "fuck the scene" and "there is no alternative" resound throughout the issue, signaling the crisis that would result in the invention of the term "indie" as the new designator of cool (pending corporate takeover). But I think the real story is that people were just generally angrier in the early 90s. A story featuring a list of Vancouver clubs urges readers to go vent their rage at "My Dad's Ass," a warehouse bar featuring upstart acts like Greek death metal band Morbid Obesity. Or better yet, instead of going to a bar at all, we are advised to "huff some glue in a parking lot" and "yell at old ladies."

A few pages over, writer Jerome Broadway uses an entire page to catalogue the various objects of his hate in Vancouver. Targets include Commodore bouncers, Terry David Mulligan, and Anyone Who Listens to KISS FM, a radio station apparently designed "for people on the critical list in the intensive care unit at VGH." Towards the end the clouds part briefly, as one writer dreams of building "something of meaningful and lasting value: a positive underground," but it feels like he's just put that in there to keep his parents happy.

Watch for more random anger in future issues. For now, in the spirit of 1991, fuck MC Lars.

TEXTUALLY ACTIVE

Inkstudz

by Robin McConnell

Great comic-based films are hard to come by, and too bad. Film is a natural enough jumping-on point for new recruits to comics. Unfortunately, for every Good World there is a Judge Dredd (first a popular British comic), a Batman and Robin (the Clooney one), and a League of Extraordinary Gentlemen. The gem-to-crap ratio runs high.

For a better impression of what comic can achieve, check out the local scene. Many Vancouver talents put out original mini-comix of fantastic quality. Some of my local faves include Hate Song by Fred Grisold, Space Jet by Mike Myhre, and the exclusively online serial of Mr. Sean Esty, Marooned.

Hate Song is one part Fubar and one part Boogie Nights, mixed by your most offensive uncle. It tells the violent tale of Orest, a hard-done-by redneck who, in the two issues out so far, encounters plenty of sex, drugs, and madness for any over-the-counter subversive. Grisold has a simple style, but it suits his subject. Orest journeys from his father's home to a lab where a mad scientist is bent on remaking Orest into a porno superstar.

During his training, Orest endures the sort of tortures that will appeal to fans of the original Hanzo the Razor, a movie of Samurai-splation fame (if you haven't seen Hanzo, do so—he's Japan's John Shaft). A drug-induced stupor summons what appears to Orest as the ghost of John Holmes, who then advises him a la Obi Wan. I could go on. Orest, and a water buffalo then join battle against a b-grade movie actor—but Hate Song has too many great bits to give away. Before you shell out cash on the mini-comix, see www.hatesong.com, where Grisold publishes each issue before it goes to print.

Mike Myhre crafts one of the most unique mini-comix I've seen in Vancouver. Space Jet is a smorgasbord of whatever pops out Myhre's mind onto paper. Issue one conforms to the standard format of a mini-comix, and conveys innovative design despite the small print. The stories range from silly to seedy, from London's ladies of ill-repute to the heartfelt tale of a drunk and his best friend, a pink elephant.

Issue two has a more personal touch. Myhre's autobiographical stories are among the strongest in his repertoire. They are touching, hold interest, and cannot be lumped with the majority of self-referential comix. Myhre sharpens his design edge with issue two, which resembles a box of Maltersers. Check out Myhre's stuff while he is still relatively unknown, so you can show it off when his name



grows big and famous.

Sean Esty, also relatively unknown, is plugging away at the online comic Marooned. It falls somewhere between Skull Island and the good part in Goonies when everything starts to go wrong. So far, the story is just 17 pages long, but new instalments are worth waiting for. The art is like a hip hop Sam Keith, with an injection of Mike Mignola scenery. Esty doesn't sell in stores yet, but don't let that stop you from killing time at skullcano-island.com.

Comix are more than superheroes and Hollywood supplements; they are also treats of local talent which won't hurt your wallet. For more on comix goodness, listen to Inkstudz, Thursday at 2 PM on CYTR, hosted by myself and Colin Upton, the city's original small press expert. You can also check us out at inkstudz.livejournal.com.

Lyricology

by Benjamin Wood

Nowadays, a lot of noteworthy and, dare I say literary, song-writing passes through the press unsung. On the flip side, heaps of ungodly offerings flutter up unpunished, into the Hall of the Song Lyric (James Blunt's Beautiful is a horrific example, a horrific example, a horrific example, it's true). So, without further ceremony, I'll stop pissing about.

Part One: Everywhere's Romanceless

Recently, the extraordinarily prolific Ryan Adams released Jacksonville City Nights—an album of his trademark alt-country songs, recorded with a new back-up band, The Cardinals. The Cardinals add the lap-steel twang and layered harmonies Adams has missed since he left Whiskeytown years ago. The album, while patchy, is more or less a concept record: songs for a stifling hometown. "The End" is just about as good as alt-country lyrics get:

*The trains run like snakes through Pentecostal pine
Filled up with cotton and
fine slow gin
Oh Jacksonville, how you
burn in my soul
How you hold all my
dreams captive*

Captive dreams echo Bruce Springsteen's sentiments toward his native New Jersey, which he etched brilliantly in two lines of his 1975 epic, "Thunder Road."

*There were ghosts in the
eyes of all the boys she sent
away
They haunt this dusty beach
road in the skeleton frames
of burned-out Chevrolts*

Adams also has the knack of brevity; he conveys hard-won feelings in a single verse. He is definitely worth keeping an eye out, if only to see if he can shake his inconsistency and ascend, with Springsteen, to the title of 'American landscape.'

Meanwhile, pitched on the other side of the Atlantic, there's little England. And, if you don't already know, there's more to it than London. London is the genitalia of England—everything seems to go down there, but the excitement quickly wears. Sheffield, from which Alex Turner of the Arctic Monkeys hails, is England's supper-bowl: a hard-working, unpretentious city where bad shit's always on the move.

Being a north England native myself, I approached the much-hyped Monkeys with trepidation. I willed myself to hate their debut, but found my resolve broken by the closing track, "A Certain Romance." The song is a perfect capture of the dreary weariness that was my home. The lyrics paint a likely portrait of doomed British youth; a sight unseen since the early days of Morrissey, who saw the same dimness in Manchester that young Alex Turner & Co. see

in Sheffield.

Arctic Monkeys are thoroughly uninspired musically (they sound like a random northerner singing The Strokes karaoke), but their lyrics give voice to unemployed and therefore violent young British just as the songs of The Smiths and The Jam did.

*Well oh they might wear classic Reeboks
Or knackered Converse
Or trucky-bottoms tucked in socks
But all of that's what the point is not
The point's that there ain't no romance around here*

Arctic Monkeys have the fastest-selling debut album in the UK ever, and it's because lyrics like these, from "A Closing Romance," became anthems for the teens who hang out, drink high-strength lager, and roll cars because there's fuck-all else. Like Adams and Springsteen in America, Arctic Monkeys can turn a good song from a doomed city.

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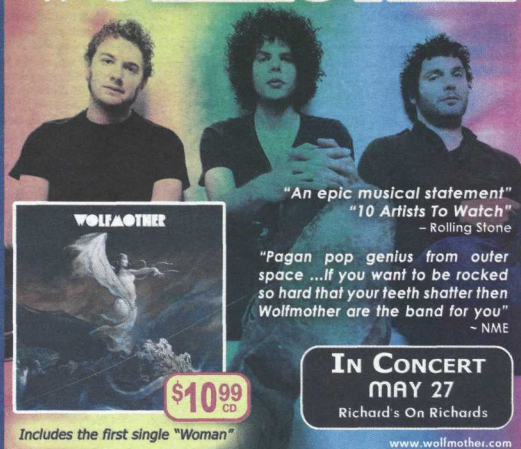
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MIXTAPE/ISLANDS



SIDE A: By Nick Diamonds

1. Paul Simon - *Boy in the Bubble*

No sense in skirting around the indelible influence Mr. Simon has left on me. This is the first song on the first album (*Graceland*) that truly leapt out at me as a youngster. I will never forget the memories that this song, and the rest of the record conjures up every time I put it on (which, in order to preserve its sanctity, is a rare occasion).

2. Donovan - *There is a Mountain*

Mr. Ward breaks the rhythm of his groovy, upbeat bongo beats. No other song can own the flute the way "There is a Mountain" can. I like the imagery. West Coastly!

3. M. Ward - *Paul's Song*

Mr. Ward breaks the rhythm of 20+ year old tunes with a song released just last year. Heartbreakingly sweet, "Paul's Song" embodies the truth and sadness wrapped up in the life of a performer on the road.

4. Jim Guthrie - *You Are Far (Do You Exist?)*

This is one of my favourite songs of all time. Jim Guthrie crafts such perfect pop gems. He's a Canadian treasure, and his records get better all the time. I blatantly steal all my shit from this guy, and this song in particular. And now he's in *Islands*!

5. Sparks - *Achoo*

This really takes things up a notch in the party that is Side A. Sparks are, essentially, two brothers from LA, who began in the early 70s playing hyper rock n' roll, going on to influence Queen. This is off their 4th record *Propaganda*, and it climaxes with a furious flurry of multitracked sneezing put through a manic blender of gated delay effects! How cool is that! These guys are still at it, and just put out a new record, *Hello Young Lovers*. Check it out.

6. Chet - *Track 03 from Kau'ai*

Sadly, I don't know the name of this song, but it's gorgeous. Ryan Beattie has a masterful voice that moves with such ease and grace. They hail from Victoria and they're incredible. Check them out.

7. Bob Dylan - *Ballad of A Thin Man (live version) from No Direction Home*

This mega-coffee-chain-affiliated release doesn't need any accolades from me, but I don't care. The sound from this recording is so fresh and this is the best organ playing in rock music.

8. Penguin Café Orchestra - *Pythagoras's Trousters*

There's so much music I'd like to put on this mixtape, but if there's one group I have to mention, it's Penguin Café Orchestra. They were an instrumental orchestral pop group from England that made incredible music in the late seventies and early eighties. This song was playing when a good friend came over to my apartment one day, and after standing at the doorway for the entire duration of the song, he began to cry.

9. Gino Washington - *Puppet On A String*

Gino Washington is a 60s soul singer who came up at around the time of all the Motown greats. Instead of joining their ranks, he did it on his own and was subsequently much less known than his peers. Notoriously tardy, he showed up late for a gig supporting the Stones back in the day, and they had to play before him!

10. Elizabeth Cotton - *Freight Train*

This was the first song I heard by Elizabeth Cotton and it blew me away with its simple, direct arrangement and beautiful and masterful finger picking. She started getting recognition in her late sixties after years of playing quietly in her home, or the Seegers' home, coincidentally where she worked for years as a maid, stealing away to play on (Pete Seeger's) banjo.

11. Cannibal Ox - *Atom*

One of my favourite things about hip hop is the clever wordplay involved. Can Ox drop this f-bomb: "This ain't the space race, so why you rushin'?"

12. Fatlip - *"What's Up Fatlip?"*

This is maybe the most honest, self-effacing song in rap music. Fatlip tells it like it is, and self-deprecates overtop an insidiously catchy beat.

13. Viktor Vaughn - *"Let Me Watch" with Apami B*

Apami B is an unbelievable MC and is completely underrated in underground rap. She gets her dues here, one-upping MF Doom's Viktor Vaughn in a no-holds-barred battle of the sexes!

14. Jaylib - *"McNasty Fifth"*

The late Jay Dee and his collaboration with the prolific west coast producer Madlib yielded my fave off the record, featuring Frank N' Dank, Toronto-Detroit party rappers. If you want to start a party, put this fucking record on.

15. Man Man - *Van Helsing Boombox*

These guys are really really awesome. They just put out a new record. Check it out.

16. Brian Eno - *Discreet Music*

Okay, it's 30 minutes long and would probably take up most of side A on a real mixtape, but fuck it, this song is the birth of ambient music as we know it. Inspired by Erik Satie and an interesting turn of events in his own life: after a debilitating accident, Eno was left bed-ridden. A friend came to visit, bringing with her a record of 18th century harp music as a gift. She put the record on the turntable right before leaving but the volume was too low and the left speaker not connected properly, making it virtually inaudible. The music became, in Eno's words, "the ambience of the environment, just as the colour of the light, and the sound of the rain."



SIDE B: By J'aime Tambour

1. J Dilla - *Lightworks*

This is off the new Donuts album by Dilla. He's my absolute favorite hip hop producer of all time. He gets a kind of black magic quality to all his beats that I find totally mystifying, and I think his passing is one of the saddest things to happen to music in my life.

2. Chief Commander Ebenezer Obey - *Ewa Wowun Ojumi Ri*

He's the big name in the African juju scene. I like the hypnotic quality that he achieves without the layered guitar that is common to most African pop music. It's a bit psych-folk too, but much darker and more danceable.

3. Toby Driver - *In the I. I. Library Loft*

This album of soft, pretty guitar based music is perfect to listen to when you try to fall asleep but aren't quite ready. It's the right state of mind for this beautiful, non-melodic sound.

4. Leo Janacek - *On the Overgrown Path*

One of the few 20th century classical composers who does melodic music I can get down with. A Czech composer who claimed to get his inspiration from the speech patterns of his native language, Janacek manages to keep it very personal and not too nationalistic.

5. Deerhoof - *Spirit Ditties of No Tone*

I wasn't super into these guys before their newest record, but this one has everything I like from pop music. Lots of noisy stuff, amazing drums, and incomprehensible lyrics.

6. Fanfare Ciocaria - *Doina si Balasancea*

This is from an album of gypsy music that I absolutely love. I started playing the clarinet so that I could try to play this kind of stuff, but it will be a long time before I can even pretend. It starts off somber and lush, and then jumps into the craziest upbeat dance music ever. The trumpet playing alone is worth the price of the album.

7. Stevie Wonder - *I Was Made to Love Her*

This is the one of my favorite pop songs of all time. The younger Stevie has a quality to his voice that nobody has ever captured, despite entire generations trying their hardest. Some might think the lyrics in this are a bit facile or trite but when he sings it, I believe every word.

8. Think About Life - *Paul Cries*

Martin has been around Montreal for a while now doing different stuff. This is the first time I heard Graham and Matt, I'm so glad they all got together to make one of the best things to come out of this city in a long time. Not to mention they are the sweetest people you could ever hope to meet.

9. Benjamin Britten - *Cello Suite #1, First Movement*

This is absolutely the most moving piece of solo cello music imaginable. I actually find a lot of his stuff unlistenable boring, but this one is so huge and beautiful that I can listen to it a hundred times in a row and it loses none of its power. Arvo Part's *Cantus for B. Britten* is also really great, but didn't make this mix tape.

10. Cadence Weapon - *Lisa's Spider*

Not a lot of rap comes out of Edmonton, or at least I don't hear any of it, so it's really surprising that Cadence can emerge from the scene there such a mature and original artist. I love his punchlines and his wordplay and his beats are really something else.

11. Company Flow - *The Fire In Which You Burn Slow*

I'm the living circle circle dot dot [now I've got my cottle shot—ed.], nobody can touch me.

12. MF Doom - *Hero vs. Villain*

This is off the Operation: Doomsday record, which completely blew my mind when I first heard it. My cousin Ben played it for me a long time ago. He somehow has the inside track on the best unheard hip hop, despite living in Guelph, Ontario and not owning a computer. He told me about Warcloud too, who is amazing and should be found and listened to.

13. Gonzales - *Gogol*

I wasn't a fan of his whole half-joke rap persona, so it came as a double surprise when I went to see his show at last year's Pop Montreal. It's quite frankly the best instrumental music to come out since Penguin Cafe, and that was decades ago. This song has everything I love about Erik Satie, but manages to avoid any copycatting. Stunning.

14. Daniel Johnston - *The Monster Inside of Me*

Daniel Johnston was a shining light when me and my friends were first starting to make home recordings back when I was a kid. I didn't know anything about his personal life, but they had some records of his at CERU (the Guelph college radio station) and I loved them all. This song is from the gorgeous *Laurie* EP and manages to keep all the charm of his earlier songs while being much more melodically and lyrically advanced.

15. Erik Satie - *Prelude de la Porte Heroique du Ciel*

This is perhaps my favorite piece of music ever written. Erik Satie is my favorite composer and he originated a lot of ideas that have influenced many if not most of my favorites who have come since. This one isn't considered one of his major works but there is a quality to it that hits me right where it counts. If I can make one recommendation to anybody, it's to listen to Satie's music, please.

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Living 'Lodge: A Conversation with Ryder from The Mohawk Lodge

Chris-a-riffic fired off this email to me before going on vacation for a month and a half:

Ben,

I need to interview Ryder from The Mohawk Lodge, but I cannot do out of my mind. Could you help me out. I would be in your debt.

Love, Chris

because I am so busy and tired

by Ben Lai

Chris is a nice fellow. I should be helping him out instead of vice versa for a change, and talking to Ryder Havdale would be pleasant. I've known Ryder for many years now, beginning when he was in the band Second Narrows, continuing while he was part of Kids These Days and now with his latest project called The Mohawk Lodge. And hey, we could meet at the Fringe Café—they have an excellent selection of beverages there. So plans were made, drinks consumed, and a delightful chat ensued.

Discorder: The current lineup of The Mohawk Lodge is different from when you first started.

Ryder: The Lodge has always been about community, it's always been a bit of a collective. We started the first recording in a cabin by a lake, laid all the beds over a weekend. And then I just brought the 8 track to friends' places, apartments back in the city. So it wasn't really a band in the beginning, it kind of came together as a whole bunch of people, and we ended up with seven people on the record. After the record was done, we ended up playing as those seven people in the band, but on the record a lot of people only played on a couple of tracks. It didn't need as many people for the style of music, so we tried to part it down a bit, due to touring and who could go on the road. It's a different lineup. It's pretty exciting right now, we got Arch from Ready-made playing guitar, Cory [Price] is still on guitar, Rob [Josephson]'s still on drums, Ben Labelle on bass.

Would you agree that your live shows rock harder than they did before with this roster?

Yes, it has definitely gotten more rocking. It comes from the people that are playing in it now. Also, when we were playing with acoustics, there were all the sound problems on the stage with the acoustics feeding back. Now we're just strictly electric, and turning it up.

And you seem to be showing even more assertiveness and confidence with your vocals.

The first record was me learning how to sing. The first record was actually an excuse to write a whole bunch of songs that I can sing to. The next record is going to be the next step.

So is there a new album in the works?

There is. It's called *Bloodlines*, the tentative title. It got started after our tour out east in September. Darryl Neudorf is playing drums on it, and laid all the beds for seven tracks. We came back and have been recording since—did a couple days at the Hive, and also took it up to our cabin.

Lyricaly has your music changed? Is there a general theme to the album?

Rock! [Laughs] It's still very sincere and honest—to me anyways. Life and Death. This is Chapter 2. Some of the songs were written in fits of frustration or moments of clarity. Actually it's funny because a couple of songs on the last album were about my current girlfriend, and it was a bit of a battle to win her. But we've been living together for two years now, and sometimes comfort is a crutch. You can only write so many happy songs—I prefer the sad songs.

When will the album be released?

It's going to be ready for the end of summer. Finishing it with Darryl first week of June, around North by Northeast. We're going to go out there for North by Northeast and stay for a week and mix the record. We like to have three months to prepare records, so it'll probably come out September 1.

You created White Whale Records, what sort of work do you do with that?

I pretty much run it all. I had a couple of interns that helped out at different points for a couple of days a week. Everything from website to mailouts to booking shows. Right now I'm working for Endearing [Records], so the Whale gets taken care of at night.

Currently there are six bands on White Whale Records, and your own band The Mohawk Lodge is one of them. How do you devote your time equally and make everyone happy?

It is hard to focus on your own band when there are five other bands wanting the same amount of time, and you have to be very diplomatic about where you are going to put your energy. But what it comes down to is that the label matches the energy of the band. If the band is going on the road that's our priority, making sure they got the press, and that they got everything they need. We do have a publicist actually, so I don't do everything. Ken [Beattie] at Killbeat does our press. At times things come up that priority for a certain band. We sort of just fend off everything as it comes in.

What is the ultimate plan for The Mohawk Lodge, where do you want to take the band?

The thing I love about The Lodge is that it's my project and I'm totally open to it taking any new direction that it wants to go, with new people playing and different sounding records. I feel it's got a long life ahead of it, and I'm not going to be satisfied until I got a whack of records under the belt. Right now with The Lodge we're looking to license [the records] around the world, and just set it up so we can tour and be musicians full time. That's my goal.

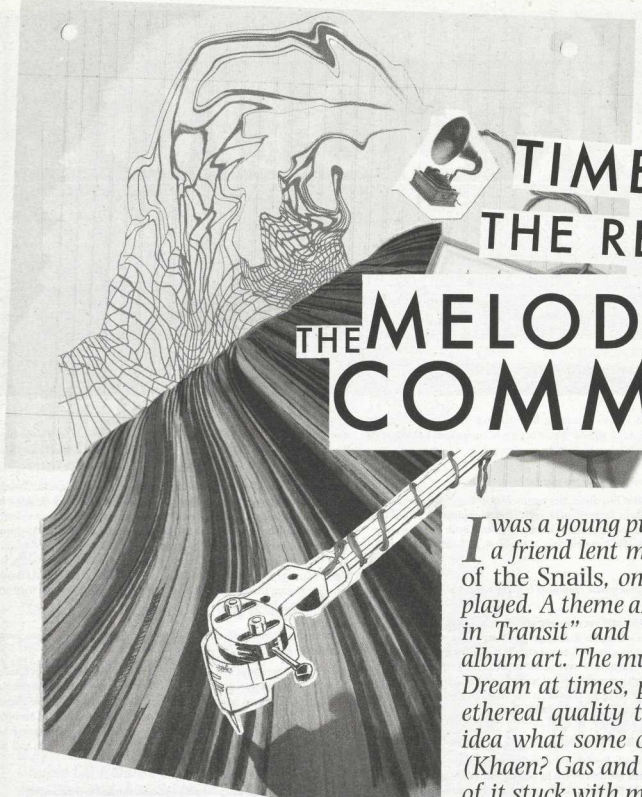
Right now you guys are probably the tallest band in Vancouver.

[Laughs] I never thought of it that way. Well, we are all working on our posture. If I actually sorted my posture out, we might actually be the tallest band in Vancouver.

The Mohawk Lodge will be playing May 6th at the Media Club with Great Aunt Ida, Heartwarming and The Metic.

Illustration by Phieu Tran





TIME SLIPS AWAY: THE RESURGENCE OF THE MELODIC ENERGY COMMISSION

I was a young punk kid into DOA and the Subhumans when a friend lent me a decidedly odd local LP, *The Migration of the Snails*, on which his relative, George McDonald, had played. A theme album, it featured song titles like "Gastropods in Transit" and "Escargot," and had bizarre, snail-related album art. The music reminded me of prog rock and Tangerine Dream at times, psychedelic rock at others, but had an arty, ethereal quality that defied easy pigeonholing, and I had no idea what some of the instruments listed on the back were (Khaen? Gas and steam bass? Delatronics?). The strangeness of it stuck with me—but I didn't spin it more than twice, and went back to listening to the Dead Kennedys.

AN INTERVIEW WITH DON XALIMAN AND RANDY RAINE-REUSCH by Allan MacInnis

Flash forward 23 years—23 years filled with musical and psychopharmacological experimentation—and I'm standing at Cathedral Square, listening to a city-commissioned art project by Mercury Theatre III. George McDonald is playing a homemade theremin as part of a space-noise jam, but I don't recognize his name. A few months later, local musician Dan Kibke introduces me to George, in the audience at an Acid Mothers Temple show at Richards on Richards, but I'm preoccupied with practicing my Japanese by offering Makoto Kawabata a "special" cookie and still don't clue in. A few months later still, Dan plays me a disc George is on, and the penny drops: "Wait a second—didn't these guys once record an album called *The Migration of the Snails*?"

And so the old adage is proven correct: when the listener is ready, the musician will come, in this case in the form of the Melodic Energy Commission. Vancouver's best-kept psychedelic secrets re-released their first two LPs, *Stranger in Mystery* (1979) and *Migration of the Snails* (1980) on one disc, *Moonphase Compendium*, in 1997. Last year, the core members of the band, Don Xaliman, George McDonald, and Randy Raine-Reusch, alongside a host of non-local collaborators, released a well-received new CD, *Time Is a Slippery Concept*, on Xaliman's "indy audio video studio" label, Energy Discs. They're now set to actually try to get heard in the city that spawned them.

Describing their music is no easy feat. It's pop music to be sure, and spicy, but difficult to pin down otherwise. Raine-Reusch, who makes a "full-time career in the music biz" as composer, musician, and writer, lists influences from "the Beatles, Hendrix, Pink Floyd, and the

Dead," to "African and Indian music, jazz, and blues." He's fronted a 30-piece didjeridu orchestra and has associated or played with avant-gardists as diverse as John Fahey, John Cage, Eugene Chadbourne, Mats Gustafsson, Jean Derome, and Pauline Oliveros. If you think you're getting close to being able to categorize him, note that he also played various world instruments on Yes' *The Ladder* and on Aerosmith's album *Pump* (!), organized festivals in Borneo and has collaborated with Cirque du Soleil, Ann Mortifee, and Alpha YaYa Diallo. Like Don Xaliman (who recently "performed on faglung—a Filipino stringed instrument—for the Governor General of Canada at the Chinese night market"), he is fond of traditional instruments from other cultures. On the new album he is credited with playing flutes, sailing, balmbing, shakuhachi, dizi, duduk, and more—a pretty diverse list, given that the overall texture of the disc is electronic. In case you still aren't clear on just how difficult the MEC are to type, there's a rap tune too ("Beehive Jive"), and a track, "For Sure," that evokes Led Zeppelin's "Battle of Evermore," with Xaliman's mystical vocal stylings—at least until it starts to sound like an Indonesian gamelan orchestra. These guys are slippery indeed.

Raine-Reusch, as accomplished a musician as he is, points out that Don Xaliman is "really the core of it all. We all do our own thing and get together when Xaliman calls us." Xaliman, who also plays guitar, keyboards, and writes the band's lyrics, described his process via email: "Over the years commissioners at improv sessions have been enticed to display a heightened state of creative bliss and it's sonically frozen in time," and added to Xaliman's sound library.

Xaliman "restructures the cream to form a composition that never existed before. It's really an extraction process. Harmless, but capable of enhancing or distorting reality. That's why some people refer to our music as psychedelic: we have found ways to create psychototically appearing musical soundscapes with and without actually consuming the elixir. 'Psychedelic' refers to the experience the listener receives, rather than the experience the musician is having. It's really just about painting mystical, magical, sonic scenery...At times the sound is made up of many layers of almost subliminal instrumentation. I use that method to create full and unusual ambience rather than just throw a bunch of reverb effects into the mix."

Xaliman's sources for the new album were recorded over a 20 year period, and include recordings he made of "2000 drummers at the Plaza of Nations and 100 people chanting Ohm in Kits House," to which Randy added dulcimer and George, theremin. As he says, "there are well over 2000 musicians on this album."

The band owes much of its popularity in "European space-rock circles" to Del Dettmar, who, Xaliman explains, "learned his chops from playing sheets of synthesized sounds with Hawkwind for their first five albums." Dettmar was in BC to make some money planting trees when he struck up a friendship with the MEC and "helped put the music together for the first two albums. He had a British analog EMS Synthi, the same synthesizer Pink Floyd used on *Dark Side of the Moon*, and is a true wizard with a wand—a woodsman double-headed axe with a big bass string clamped to the handle. Melodic Energy Commission was fortunate to have a brief ride on his cloak-tail, and even though

we never sounded much like Hawkwind, we were well received for our imaginative textures." Their long out-of-print LPs fetch hefty collectors' prices in Europe, and their CDs are easier to find in stores there than here.

Another reason Vancouverites may not be so familiar with the MEC, as Xaliman explains, is that they've "rarely performed live as the Melodic Energy Commission, either here or anywhere else." In 2005, they did a "musé and laser improvisation at the Planetarium," called "Nearly See Clearly," which Xaliman recorded and may yet release. Otherwise, they hadn't performed with all three core members since the mid-1980s, when they opened for Captain Beefheart and his Magic Band on their farewell tour at the Commodore Ballroom. Xaliman proudly reports that the band received a "heartfelt standing ovation and an encore," got to say hello to the Captain, and were compared to Gong by one of the band members. They also had fun eating the food and drinking the beer on the Captain's rider.

I asked Xaliman about his philosophy of music. "Music has the potential of moving energy within our being and altering moods. It's like a movie where you get caught up in the comedy, adventure and dramatic ride. We want you to leave the theatre feeling that you experienced a good story and will come back someday. Like after an invigorating sonic massage. A refreshing vacation to the space between particles of time."

As one might gather, there is a fondness for hippie culture in Xaliman, who likes "its tribal integrity and [the way it] morphed itself into a colourful street and village culture." He says, "along with every other techno-traveller, and an alien crossbreed." Raine-Reusch concurs: "a lot of the ideas of the early hippie movement I still live with: peace, harmony, the need to preserve nature....I have a hard time with all the greed and war in the world at the moment."

Given their music and values, one might be surprised to discover that the members of the band I talked to are not, in fact, big fans of drugs. Raine-Reusch's mother was an alcoholic, so he "stayed away, except for a short and disastrous foray." A Taoist since age 15, he has "focused on deep meditation and trance" in order to enhance his perceptions. Xaliman likewise says that he is "not into doing drugs," and prefers thinking of their music as "Otherworld Music," rather than "psychedelic." (He coyly adds however, "I sometimes partake in sacred herbs with psychoactive properties.") During the peak of their live performances in the early 80s, they did drink a fair bit of alcohol. Xaliman notes, "This phase was documented on a cassette called M=E/C2, and a rare 45 rpm single, distributed mostly in California and Scotland. I never liked the mixes but the music truly rocks," Xaliman says. "Recently I transferred the raw tracks to digital and am looking for a spot of time to mix them properly. They are so different that I may think up another band name for that project..."

George McDonald is "presently working way up north in Alberta, searching for oil," and could not be reached for comment. Don says "he's built the most amazing theremin and is anxious to perform with it and his electric guitar," and will definitely be involved in future MEC projects. One release to look forward to, *Congenial Twist*, will be coming out this summer. Xaliman describes it as "joyous, mysterious instruments made with unusual sounds and instruments... composed for a magic and reptiles show. It will have an accompanying storybook for kids."

Xaliman is also interested in video and visual art, and has been "intermittently exploring photography and graphics for posters and album covers, recently for Mantravani Orchestra, Orchid Ensemble, Richard Hite and the recent designs for Melodic Energy Commission." Some of his work can be seen on their website, www.melodicenergy.com. The band is hopeful that the internet will pave the way to their becoming better known; though Nepton and Zulu stock their discs, most of their sales have, as of yet, happened through their site. Raine-Reusch's website is at www.asza.com. MP3s of a few of their tracks are available at <http://www.myspace.com/melodicenergycommission>. Musical adventures await.

Illustration by
Guillaume Boucher

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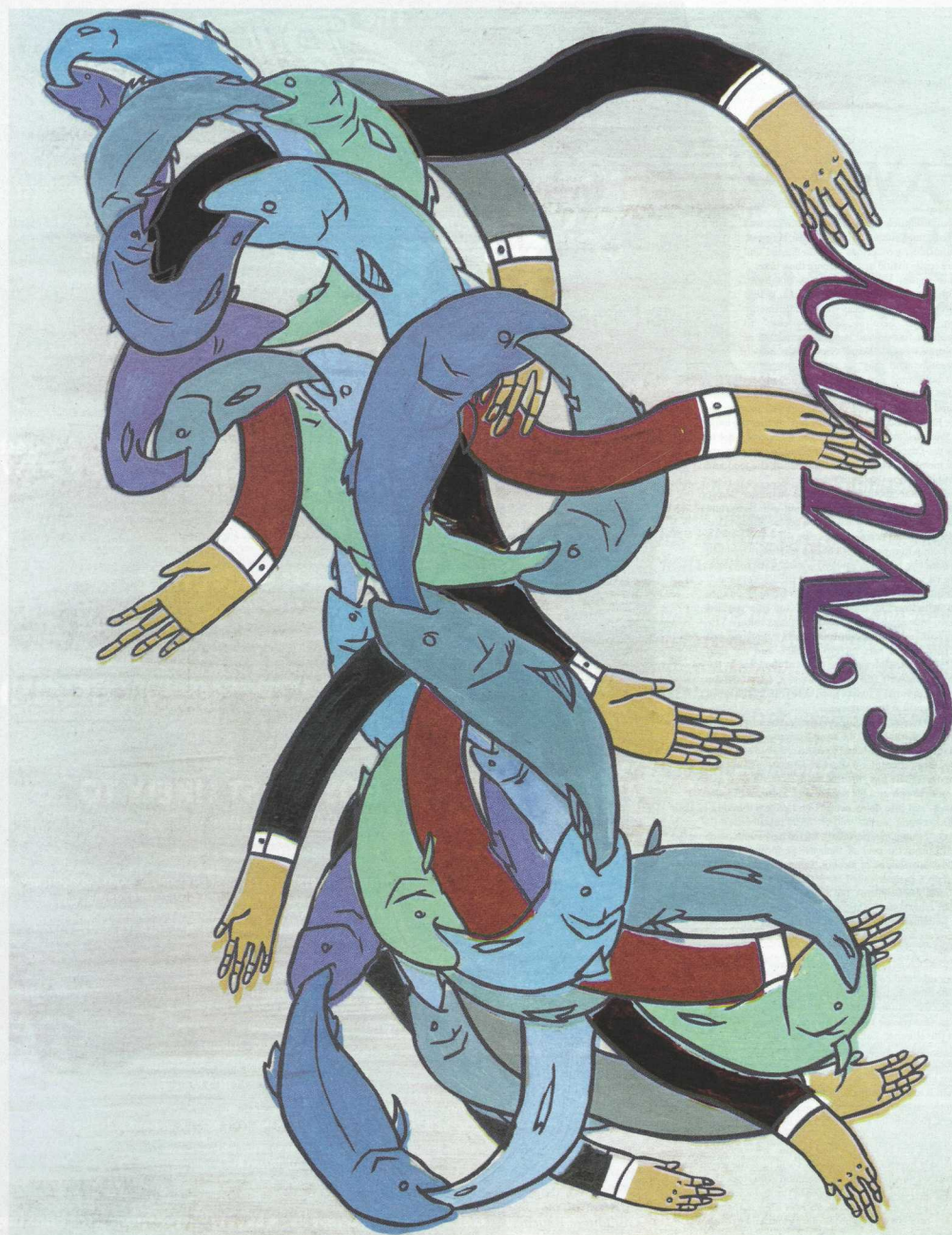
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HOLLA BACK	WED	Hip Hop & R&B - Reggae J SWING - FLIPOUT	\$4 HEINEKEN - \$2 HIGHBALLS \$4.75 ALIZE
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7	Rainer Maria, Ambulette @ Asholt Sunk Rockdown, Frog Eyes, Book of Lists @ Richard's Young Heroes, Wednesday Night Heroes, The Draft @ W.L.S.E. Hall Bill Ronge's Acid Test CD Release @ Rime	8	Secret Machines @ Richard's Bastard, Cuckoo, The Janie Be Nedlamitt Dhillon @ Rime Lower Lower Lower, In Media Res @ Railway Club Nedlamitt Dhillon @ Rime	10	Corbin Murdoch & The Dyke, The Janie Be A Crow's Glory, Lamb From Crash @ Video-In Studios Crash @ Cedar Jazz Club Ken Alderoff's Convergence Ensemble @ Rime	11	DO JNK Drawing Social @ Little Media Club The Spontiffs @ Railway Broadband Noise @ Rory Nedlamitt Dhillon @ Rime Gounod's Faust @ Queen Elizabeth Theatre	12	Speaking of Devils, The The Spontiffs @ Railway Broadband Noise @ Rory Nedlamitt Dhillon @ Rime Gounod's Faust @ Queen Elizabeth Theatre	13	Starlight Minis, Dos Malos The Spontiffs @ Railway Broadband Noise @ Rory Nedlamitt Dhillon @ Rime Gounod's Faust @ Queen Elizabeth Theatre
14	The Vibrators, Witchhunt, Sph Shugs, The Jits @ Asholt Lorraine Foster Quintet @ Cedar Jazz Club Sudan's, Saul Benson Trio @ Rime	15	DI A-Trak, Coma Baker & DJ (The Hub) @ Plaza Club Unsponsored @ Rime	17	The Strakes @ Plaza of Nedlamitt Dhillon @ Rime Nedlamitt Dhillon @ Rime Nedlamitt Dhillon @ Rime	18	Penang, cackerman, The Spontiffs @ Railway Broadband Noise @ Rory Nedlamitt Dhillon @ Rime Gounod's Faust @ Queen Elizabeth Theatre	19	The Whines, Ubersesky @ Plaza Club The Spontiffs @ Railway Broadband Noise @ Rory Nedlamitt Dhillon @ Rime Gounod's Faust @ Queen Elizabeth Theatre	20	The (International) Noise The Spontiffs @ Railway Broadband Noise @ Rory Nedlamitt Dhillon @ Rime Gounod's Faust @ Queen Elizabeth Theatre
21	Big Red Sun, Buckle Up Chasing in the House with DJ Heather, ZADIX, Bryan Jones @ Commodore Sara Marieros @ Rime Ross Taggart Trio @ Cedar Jazz Club	22	Karin Plato Ensemble @ Alternative Worlds Silkhu/Babin/Brooks @ Cedar Jazz Club	24	Mogwai @ Commodore The Spontiffs @ Railway Broadband Noise @ Rory Nedlamitt Dhillon @ Rime Gounod's Faust @ Queen Elizabeth Theatre	25	Consequences, Blood Merchant, The Spontiffs @ Railway Broadband Noise @ Rory Nedlamitt Dhillon @ Rime Gounod's Faust @ Queen Elizabeth Theatre	26	Architecture in Helsinki, The Spontiffs @ Railway Broadband Noise @ Rory Nedlamitt Dhillon @ Rime Gounod's Faust @ Queen Elizabeth Theatre	27	Arctic Monkeys, We Are The Spontiffs @ Railway Broadband Noise @ Rory Nedlamitt Dhillon @ Rime Gounod's Faust @ Queen Elizabeth Theatre
28	Allkiller Trio, Lawrence Arms, The Black Manta @ Orwell Cultural Centre Secher, Rockthee @ Commodore Amazda Tsoof Band @ Rime	29	Lang Lang @ Orpheum Stop Time, Furry Logic @ Cedar Jazz Club Gord Grdina's Boxcar @ Rime	31	Marques West @ Bar None Masterbaitour 2006 feat. Ministry, Revolting Cocks, Pitbull Daycare @ Commodore Julie Delapena, Ron Johnston Trio @ Rossini's Gerris With Guitars @ Rime	1	Musica, Woods @ Downtown Lustful Current Canal	2	Musica, Woods @ Downtown Lustful Current Canal	3	Musica, Woods @ Downtown Lustful Current Canal

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GOING OFF THE RAILS

KEEPING TRACK OF THE RAILWAY CLUB

by Curtis Woloschuk

☞ The Railway has just tallied the twenty-fifth anniversary of its current incarnation, a landmark worthy of celebration. During those two-and-a-half decades, this burg has watched complacently as the likes of The Town Pump and Starfish Room shuffled off this mortal coil. Yet, even the most apathetically-inclined Vancouverite harbours a fondness for "The Rail." The institution is akin to your family's tripodic, half-blind dog: it can't quite "work," a leg like it used to, but it still serves until 3:00am on the weekend. Like an expertly-trained courtesan, it knows precisely how to please its patrons regardless of their predilections.

The current era of The Railway Club was ushered in when Bob Williams became owner in 1981. Williams installed his progeny, Janet and Steve Forsyth, as managers. Shortly thereafter, Janet became the club's entertainment coordinator—a role she still holds today. "When we first started, we did cover bands for the first six months," she recalls. "Aside from the odd night, there was no club (in the city) doing original music on a regular basis. In late '81/early '82, I started booking original bands."

While the popularity and viability of live music fluctuated wildly in the ensuing years, Janet's dedication to the format has remained steadfast. "We've kept true to our roots," she submits. To wit: "We never become a sports bar when times were tough!"

Thousands of nights of live music have seen a legion of performers grace the room's compact stage, Janet's shortlist of noteworthy bookings quickly grows unwieldy: "Jonathan Richman, Ron Sexsmith, Jane Siberry, k.d. lang, T-Bone Burnett, Camper Van Beethoven, Robert Cray, Radiohead, The Beeketors, Rheostatics, Herald Nix, The Smugglers, Tragically Hip, Buttless Chaps, Carolyn Mark... and thousands more that are just as worthy."

"We get a diverse crowd with diverse tastes," she comments. "I work with many local promoters to ensure that I cover a broad

*"They had belly dancers here.
That was a common thing."*

range of tastes. I also like presenting a variety of events like poetry and performance art." While an adaptable palette has lent itself well to survival, Janet also attributes The Railway's longevity to one of its constants: "We've always had great, friendly staff."

One longstanding staff member is Stan, the club's regular doorman. Having served at his post for "more than ten years," he's watched countless countenances traipse across the threshold. He agrees with Janet that the makeup of a Railway Club member hasn't changed dramatically over the years. In fact, Stan equates the venue to a hockey team: players come and go but the team identity remains the same.

While hard-pressed to pick a line-up of Railway regulars equal to the '77 Montreal Canadiens, a handful of performances stand out for Stan. "The Blue Shadows with Billy Cowwell was the best show I ever saw here. Hands down," he enthuses. "Honourable mentions? Jeff Buckley. A great impromptu show was Los Lobos playing here right after they'd opened for U2. They just showed up and played for a half-hour to ten people."

In the mid-90s, Stan almost pulled off a booking coup of his own. The affable music aficionado had convinced Arthur Lee and his seminal band Love to play The Railway. "They're my favourite band and I had that all arranged," he chagrins. "Then, Arthur went and got himself into some trouble." "Trouble" consisted of a firearms-related arrest and subsequent jail time.

On the subject of dirty details, a dispatch from the blogosphere charges that a former Railway owner was killed when his 16-year-old girlfriend flung a hammer at his head. Queried about that claim, Stan unseeingly responds, "I don't want to comment on that one." When asked about the general state of The Railway Club prior to the Williams/Forsyth regime, he discloses, "They had belly dancers here. That was a common thing."

Curious. Curious enough to get an intrepid journalist questioning: "How much do we really know about this 'Railway Club'?" While the bar's current era accounts for a quarter century, it encapsulates but a third of the venue's existence. Well, after laboriously unearthing copious dirt concerning The Railway Club's missing years, I've compiled a special eight-paragraph report entitled: The Railway Club - The Missing Years.

Established at 579 Dunsmyth Street in 1931, The Railway Club received one of the first liquor licences issued after the end of prohibition. Initially, the venue extended membership only to Canadian Pacific Railroad employees. It soon became customary for a half-dozen roosters to disappear from each poultry shipment arriving at Seymour Street's CPR station. These wayward fowl would inevitably

resurface at The Railway, where they'd be incited into mortal combat. Ornithological conflict historians speculate that the walls of the rear smoking lounge have "seen more chicken blood than the toilet seat at a circus geeks' convention."

By decade's end, Canada had entered the fray of World War II, and the complexion of The Railway Club would be forever changed. When a large percentage of the CPR's workforce enlisted, the club addressed declining attendance by opening its doors to any individual sponsored by an existing member. Such liberal policies saw a new clientele established that drew from both the "riff" and "raff" spheres of influence.

The Pacific National Exhibition encountered labour strife in 1942 when employees of Happyland (Playland's predecessor) walked off the job. The ringleader of the work stoppage was costumed joker Bill "Pickle Pants" Grimaldi—a Railway mainstay. In what was dubbed "The Clown Strike" by local media, 22-year-old Grimaldi and his cohorts met at The Railway Club for four straight days in order to draw up their demands. However, just as negotiations were poised to commence, the military assumed control of Happyland and converted it into an internment camp. Despite that outcome, The Railway had been identified as a haven for the political left and carries of every stripe.

Postwar, the newly opened Penthouse joined The Cave, Commodore and Quadra Club as the city's premiere nightspots. Meanwhile, The Railway spent the next decade earning the rank of reputable drinking hole. While George Burns and Sammy Davis Jr. turned in appearances at the aforementioned venues, a Railway patron might occasionally spy impresario Hugh Huggitt enjoying a businessman's lunch, or actor John Drainie retiring for an evening pint.

The bar was lent some fleeting star power when Errol Flynn paid a visit in 1959. One October afternoon, the opium-added leading man arrived at The Railway intent on advancing his liver damage and plying his teenage girlfriend, Beverly Aadland, with apple brandy. Firsthand accounts state that, with Flynn indisposed, a beret-clad beatnik approached Aadland and asked if she was on a "fake out." An unimpressed Flynn interceded, only to be informed: "I was Robin Hood... Flynn then huffed out without paying his bill. It would be one of his final public appearances."

Vancouver became a political hotbed in the 1960s with groups like the Young Socialist Alliance, Vancouver Liberation Front and Don't Make a Wave Committee rising to prominence. Radical publications such as The Pedestal and The Georgia Straight hit the streets and set the scene for Bill "Don't call me Pickle Pants" Grimaldi's return to The Railway in 1969.

While spending the previous decade abroad, Grimaldi had witnessed France's general strike in May of 1968 and fallen sway to the Situationist writings of Guy Debord, author of Society of the Spectacle. Adopting the French protest adage, "Workers of the world, have fun!" Grimaldi organized weekly meetings at The Railway in hopes of once again mobilizing the city's carnies. The provocateur's hopes for an artful revolution were scuttled when he proved incapable

*"Well, it was in the '80s. We had
belly dancers for Friday lunches."*

of explaining the difference between "concentrated," "diffuse" and "integrated" spectacle to his recruits.

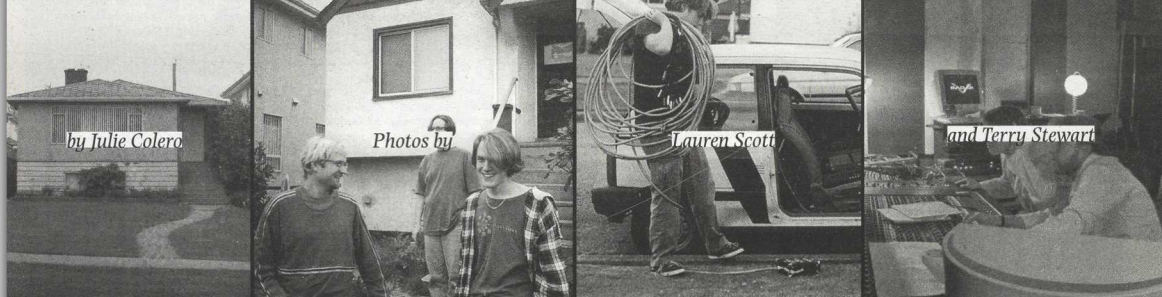
At that point, a broken Grimaldi forever surrendered his haunt to the descending hordes of belly dancers. Those gyrating castanetists ruled The Railway roost throughout the 1970s, until Bob Williams and his family usurped control in 1981. Or so Stan would have us believe. When asked to verify her doorman's claim, Janet Forsyth counters, "Well, it was in the '80s. We had belly dancers for Friday lunches."

As Karl J. Weintraub wrote, "History is the discipline closest to life; and life is rarely free of contradictions." Accordingly, it's hardly surprising that Janet and Stan's accounts of the belly dancing era prove incongruous. In turn, I anticipate that certain factions of the Truth Police (note: To serve, protect, and buzzkill!) may take issue with the odd factual inaccuracy in my special eight-paragraph report. Let it be noted that I welcome an open debate on any point they find contentious. Furthermore: I can't conceive of a better forum for such spirited discourse than the smoking lounge at The Railway Club. See you at the top of the stairs.

Another issue of Disorder is at hand and that can mean only one thing: someone's about to wax nostalgic. Be sure to join us next month for "A Look Back at Past Disorder Retrospectives."

At present, while other scribes dedicate column inches to the histories of The Hive and...umm... Disorder, my rear view mirror is set squarely on Vancouver's venerable Railway Club.

THE HIVE PART TWO



by Julie Colero

Photos by

Lauren Scott

and Terry Stewart

Hive D. The Best Hive House.

Rob Leckner, Jim Roushler and Colin Stewart in front of Hive A..

A familiar sight. Colin loading gear for a live recording. Hive D den.

Colin and Jesse at the new studios.

Ah, Vancouver. So when I asked for Hivers past and present to send fond memories and anecdotes about time spent with Colin and co., I forgot one very important thing: musicians are high ALL THE TIME. They forget things. Well, maybe that's not exactly the case, but, despite the fact that everyone I talked to got all grumpy at the mere mention of the Hive, nobody sent me a thing. Part of the problem could be that everyone's just too busy honing their musical kraitwerks to take a turn at writing, or that bands like Pink Mountaintops are on multi-country Buro-tours.

Steven Balogh was once a part of the touring Pink Mountaintops troupe, but is now staying put in Vancouver to play with the Anemones. Steve had a good story to tell about recording with Colin with one of his other bands. "Colin did a lot of live recordings when the Hive was still located in the basement of their house, he'd pack up his gear and take it to the venue for a very reasonable fee. I'll always remember the day we recorded the first Baron Samedi ESQ record at The Sugar Refinery. We played there on a Friday, left our gear set up and returned with Colin the next day at around 11 am. The whole time we were recording there was a prep cook in the kitchen making soup and Stephen (Horwood, original proprietor) weaving through with a ladder replacing lightbulbs, making espressos and just generally going about his day obliviously. Still, 3 hours later we had a decent (and surprisingly ambient noise-free) album in the can. I'd be perfectly happy to record anything I ever do with Colin, he's the ideal engineer in my opinion. 'Course I do still owe them some money."

The Hive is forever there to document local music and help fledgling artists enter into the world of recording, whether they have the cash or not (although this may have changed a wee bit since the move, what with all those heating bills...). Hive-Fi Recordings, the Hive's label, was up and running for about five years, adding a further dimension to artist development and distribution of the good musiks. Hive-Fi released albums by The Secret Threes, Chet, Parks and Rec, Burquitlam Plaza, John Rae Fletcher, and Great Aunt Ida; most of these albums are still readily available, even if a spot on the roster isn't. The rigours of running the label eventually proved too time-consuming with such a large studio to run (and a kitchen to constantly clean up), and so Terry decided that Hive-Fi Records had served its purpose. Sadly, not all the bands on the roster have found alternate labels to call home yet—anyone out there interested?

Larissa Loyva, a Hive veteran and still in her early 20s, benefited from Hive-Fi's support when they released the first Piano records. For

Larissa, both the label and the studio were key components of her youth. "I used to go to the Hive after school, and I remember doing my French homework in between takes in the control room, offering advice to Nick and Colin while they were recording. I was experimenting with smoking at the time; sometimes we'd go and smoke in the backyard, then make Slurpee runs to the 7-11. Rob had a big crush on me at the time."

That's just how laid-back it is at the Hive. Everyone's having good times, playing with Moz the dog, and reminiscing about days bygone. Colin's glad to talk about local indie superstars Black Mountain, and is happy that the band has progressed to the point where they barely need him anymore. "They have always been very, very self-sufficient," he explains. "Now it's reached the point where they record their record and then they bring it here and mix it on my stuff." He's way more interested, though, in talking about where Black Mountain came from, the unknown (or, if you're lucky, beloved) bands that he's had a hand in recording.

When I ask about bands that have gotten away, I'm quickly assured that the Hive doesn't look at things that way. Success is not really what it's about in Hive-land. When Destroyer comes up in conversation, Rob happily states, "We were just glad to do the one album with them." The Unicorns wanted quite desperately to record at the Hive, sending "elaborate love letters," according to Terry, and demos galore, but Colin and Rob didn't see a fit. Mark Larson, first a Hive intern, later a roommate, and lately long gone out east to fame and fortune, ended up mastering the "good" Unicorns stuff and doing some work on the Arcade Fire album. Mark was happy to share a tale or two about his Hive connections.

"It was spring 2001; I had just moved into the Hive. I was finishing school, and already living the audio wet dream: creamy synthesizers, sensual drum machines, lush organs, big machines with blinking lights, microphones and rock and/or roll. One of my goals was to try to figure out a way to earn a living with all of this butter. Then, it came to me: Stay up late, wait for Travis to come home from work, smoke a little dope with him. Then we'll turn on all the machines, microphones, turntables, and plug them all into each other while playing bass in the dark, all the while trying not to wake up Rob." The plan paid off, and looking back on his formative experience living at the Hive, Mark muses, "It's not just a studio, it's a community of love."

A community of love is right. Colin enjoys the nurturing aspect of recording far too much to go chasing after worldly rewards. Explaining

a recent experience in the studio with a young band, he says, "You kind of feel like a dad when you have a band like that, even though they're all bright kids, they're kind of like, 'what do I do now? I'm scared.' When I get these young bands, I try to do the best I can with what I'm given, and that's it. I'm not going to try to embellish them and make them sound better; I don't have the patience." Unwilling to push too hard, Colin likes to let bands learn from their mistakes.

Jesse works in a similar way, standing by the idea that he "would rather one of the bands that already comes to us become popular, rather than have more popular bands than them come to [us]. It's nice to help people develop their sound." He's had the privilege of helping ex-d.b.s. bandmates Andy Dixon and Paul Patko with all of the Red Light Sting recordings. "They were a cool band that had a good sound to begin with, and it was my job not to fuck it up." Recently he's done albums with the Doers, Lethbridge, Alberta band Atrophy Manuscript and Ontario band Varge, who he claims "are one of the most intense progressive bands in Canada. They sound like NoMeansNo, only take away the structure and take away the tightness at times and make it crazy. Their singer is like the Jacques Bel of punk rock. He sings with so much charisma, it's almost uncomfortable." Jesse also works on his own projects when time affords, most recently completing his Ghost House record in the living room of his home during a bit of downtime.

According to Jesse, Stu's currently in the middle of two months' recording time booked solid, so it didn't really seem necessary to intrude upon the guy's busy schedule. Stu's got bands coming up from the States on a regular basis, bands who seek him out, much like all bands who find their way to the Hive do, based on word of mouth or having heard records he's engineered. Jesse claims that the band to watch right now out of Stu's stables is Textbook Tragedy, a band that's also given Colin pause for thought—he had to revamp the Hive's vending machine because of them. "This young band called Textbook Tragedy came in, all underage, and they bought all the beer in the machine. I was like, 'I don't want to be held responsible for this.'" And this from a man who, thanks to "some great mushrooms in Hive C," has given Terry cause for grief. "I have boxes and boxes of cassette tapes in my house," groans Terry good-naturedly, "that my husband will not let me get rid of, that are all just stoner jams!" So we know that, ten years on, the Hive, despite being bigger and better, is still very much the real deal.

JOEL PLASKETT

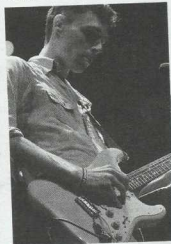
by Ian Gormely
Photographs by Beth Hamill

"You fucking suck!" Comments like this can be discouraging to anyone, let alone to a musician trying to connect with a room full of people. For Joel Plaskett, audience discontent (or apathy) while playing in Kelowna, BC, was the inspiration for "Love This Town," one of the most memorable verses on his 2005 record *La De Da*. This ode to Halifax, his hometown, is Joel Plaskett at his most reflective; yearning for home and familiarity while lost on the road in hostile environs. Characterized as both an ironic arena rocker and a soulful balladeer, the Haligonian musician is able to write lyrics that are at the same time hilarious and heartfelt. It is these contrasting elements which have earned him and his band the *Emergency* a die-hard following and growing mainstream attention, as seen by his Juno nomination for Songwriter of the Year, and his win in that same category at the East Coast Music Awards.

NOT AN EMERGENCY

Joel is proud of the recent accolades he has received but tends to view them as accomplishments along the long road in his career, as opposed to a goal which he was working towards. "There's been a lot of momentum behind what I've been doing in the past couple of years, but I've been at what I do for so long, both with the Hermit when I was younger, and with the *Emergency*...but every year has these little things that are encouraging and mark the work that we've done as a band. At the same time when you're in the midst of touring and recording and writing songs it's kind of an acknowledgement of the work you've put in all year."

When asked what he feels characterizes a good songwriter, Plaskett offers



it is, but the records I've made with my band are equally as song-based." He feels that riff rock gets a bad rap in some circles. "I always find it interesting that you don't think of Led Zeppelin as great songwriters, but they were, and they were [also] incredible band performers. People say Jackson Browne has great songs and The Who were a great band, but I liked The Who's songs better than I liked Jackson Browne's."

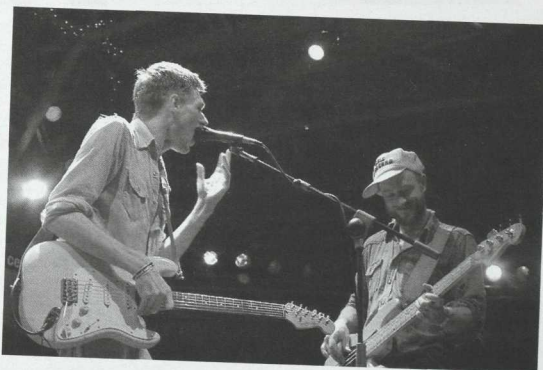
Plaskett is currently back on the road with the *Emergency* promoting their new DVD *Make A Little Noise*, which includes a hometown performance by the band at the Marquee Club in Halifax, a solo performance by Plaskett in Saskatchewan and all of the post-Hermit music videos. As an added incentive the group traveled to Toronto last fall to record a three song EP with former Big Sugar front-man Gordie Johnson. "The whole band really enjoyed working with him, he brought a lot to the table. I was really impressed."

The resulting tracks move away from the 70s riff rock of the *Emergency*'s first two albums and present a fuller, Phil Spector rhythmic feel. "I'm really pleased that these came out different than anything we've done. My mandate for these three songs was to create something that was a little bit more 50s in its references. I wanted that rock and roll edge as opposed to the late 60s or 70s thing that I've mined a lot. I was also kind of freaking out on Bruce Springsteen's *Born to Run*."

Plaskett has just finished a solo tour of Australia, which included an opening slot for Russell Crowe's band at one gig, but is returning to Canada at the beginning of the month playing gigs with the *Emergency*. He expects to tour to the East Coast this summer while writing songs for an album he hopes to record in the fall. "This may be the only chance you have to see *Emergency* on the West Coast this year. But it really just depends on when I'm going to make the new record. I think I'm just going to have to set the date, which means I'm going to be busting my ass to get the tunes together all summer."

what appears to be a description of his own approach to the craft. "I like personality and idiosyncrasy. I like people who reflect their own experiences and where they're from" he says. "But also a bit of humour for me is always welcomed. It's not necessary...there are certain people who are very serious and I love it, but often the people that you think of as being very melodramatic and serious often have more of a sense of humour than you realize."

Though recognition for all this work is starting to find its way to both Plaskett and his band, it has been a long road. His original group Thrush Hermit played their first gig when he was 15 in 1990. They would go on to record two albums for Elektra Records before disbanding in 1999, the same year Plaskett's solo debut *In Need of Medical Attention* was



released. He continued honing his sound, recording 2001's *Down at the Khyber* and 2003's *Truthfully*, *Truthfully* with the *Emergency* before taking the solo route for 2005's *La De Da*, for which he received the songwriter nominations.

Although Plaskett says that songwriting is something he takes a lot of time and pride in doing, he is quick to dismiss the singer-songwriter genre. "People say it's a song-based record and yes

If this is the case, be sure to check out Joel Plaskett and the *Emergency* at the Commodore on Friday, May 5th.

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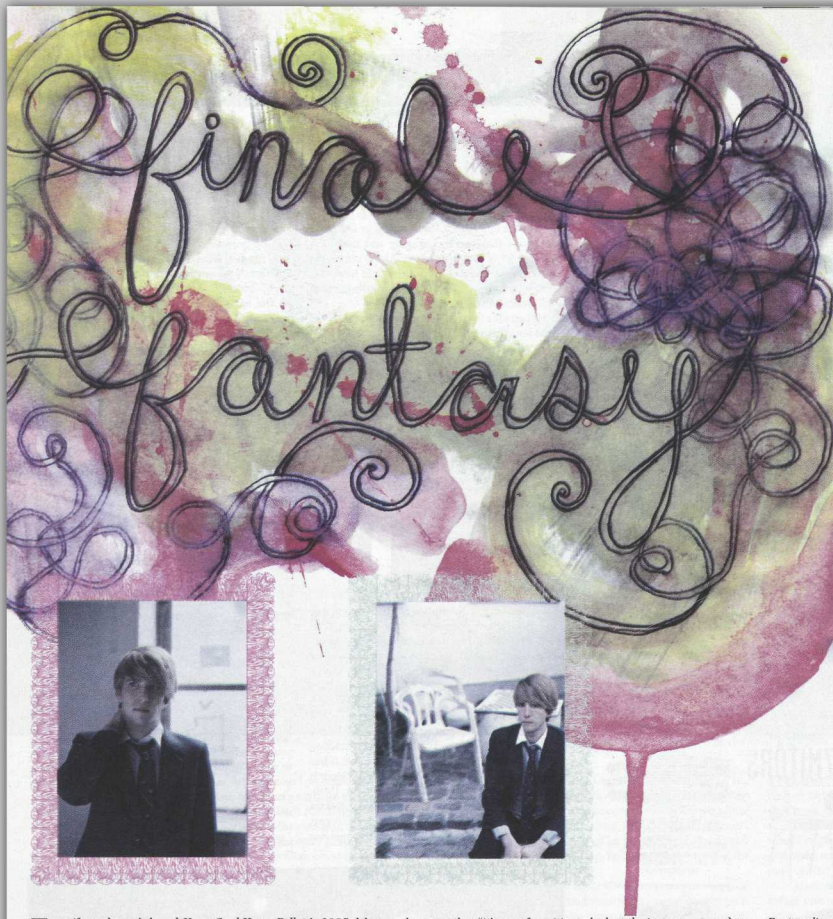
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“My teacher was a bit of an anomaly,” states Owen Pallett, of the instructor who helped him hone his musical talents for over a decade and a half. Burgeoning violinists usually change mentors every couple of years, so by the time a youthful Pallett made his way to music school, “everyone kinda laughed.” If any of his scholastic peers have kept up with him, chances are they aren’t laughing anymore.

by Quinn Omori

Illustrations by Nicole Ondre

Even if you haven’t heard *Has a Good Home*, Pallett’s 2005 debut under the name Final Fantasy, you might already be familiar with him. After getting into popular forms of music “by accident,” the Torontonian has found a home with avant garde tunesmiths Les Mouches and posters the Hidden Cameras, as well as part of Stuart McLean’s Vinyl Café. He just might be most recognizable, though, for dropping to his knees and pawing at the bum of fellow violinist Sara Neufeld at the end of the Arcade Fire’s performance of “Neighbourhood #2” on Conan O’Brien early last year. The only-sometimes touring member of 2005’s most hyped indie export also arranged the strings on the Montreallers’ celebrated debut, *Funeral*. His bowed lines have also graced records by Jim Guthrie, Picastro, and Esther, and he’s lent his remixing talents to Grizzly Bear and Death From Above 1979. That being said, don’t go thinking Pallett is merely a hired gun. Although, when I caught up with him via phone from his hometown, he had just recently finished up a recording session where he played in exchange for “a bunch of [the band’s] rare 7”s that [he] wanted.”

As a musician already involved in so many other projects, Owen originally envisioned Final Fantasy as a temporary thing. After being asked by numerous friends to put together a record of some of the solo numbers he had been accumulating, Pallett headed to the studio. With a tour with the Arcade Fire looming, the timeline was purposely short. “Let’s make it in a week. If it sucks, we’ll make another one,” he says, of the mindset going in. Contrary to the hasty conditions of its birth, the resulting album is no throwaway. Instead, *Has a Good Home* is an intricate record, sounding more like it was carefully crafted in months, rather than set to tape in a matter of days.

While drums adorn some of the record’s tracks, and additional instrumentation does creep its way in here and there, Owen’s debut as Final Fantasy is an album that’s dominated by his voice and his violin. “I use what I have in front of me...right now that’s my violin,” says Pallett, downplaying the record’s minimal instrumentation. He

also notes that “it’s easy for critics to look at the instruments and say that is what the band is... in actual fact Neil Young can make records like *Trans* and they still sound like Neil Young.” By the same token, if you’ve heard the often chaotic band Les Mouches—in which Owen took a major songwriting roll pre-Final Fantasy—you know that Owen Pallett will still sound like Owen Pallett, no matter how the songs are clothed. What makes the first Final Fantasy record distinct, however, is not the songwriting alone, nor the fact that the violin takes centre stage, but the combination of the two. “The CN Tower belongs to the Dead” is a perfect example of Pallett’s penchant for off-kilter storytelling and delivery, but there’s no denying that the crescendo of competing bowed lines—all swirling around each other in a torrent of catgut and rosin—is a significant part of what makes the song so engaging.

While he’ll occasionally perform with the St. Kitts String Quartet, a Final Fantasy show is often nothing more than Owen, his violin, and a looping pedal. Rather than employ extra musicians to fill out his songs’ multilayered arrangements, Pallett simply lays down each part, records it, and sets it to playback on a loop, repeating the process until he’s got the base of a track down. The resulting composition is a one-man symphony, providing the backdrop for vocals and more flourishes of fiddle. “It’s going to be as common as reverb or delay,” says Pallett, of the technology that’s also been utilized live by Feist, fellow violinist Andrew Bird, and Danny Michel (among others) to mimic complex album arrangements in a solo setting.

The same technique has also allowed Owen to churn out impressive reinterpretations of other artists’ creations. “As an experiment I’ll use it to cover songs,” he says, asking “how many records can you make using only a looping pedal and a violin?” For the record, so far he’s covered “three full albums” and “at least one song per album” he owns. The limited 7” EP *Young Canadian Mothers* features a jaunty studio recording of Joanna Newsom’s “Peach, Plum, Pear,” but it’s Pallett’s live tributes that have really turned some heads: Final

Fantasy live experiences have included performances of Bloc Party’s “This Modern Love,” Mariah Carey’s “Fantasy,” and Jann Arden’s “Good Mother.” A widely circulated recording of the Bloc Party cover features audience laughter as Owen starts singing. “People laugh like it’s ironic,” he notes, while insisting that none of the song choices are tongue-in-cheek. “Irony is shit. Irony means we can do better but we’re not going to. I stopped thinking anything was ironic a long time ago.” A little funny, perhaps, from a guy who named his current project after a role playing video game, christened his new album *He Poo Clouds*, and has songs titled “Adventure,” “The Chronicles of Sarnia,” and “This is the Dream of Win and Regine” (a simultaneous nod to his Arcade Fire compatriots and a play on a Dintel song), but Pallett can explain.

The various names associated with his current musical venture may be humorous, but they’re also the products of very deliberate choices, rather than half-assed jokes. While admitting that the Final Fantasy tag was “a deliberate middle finger,” Pallett sees a clear thematic tie between his music and the popular video game series. “It has to do with the end of the world... there are themes of love involved,” he says of the series’ melodramatic quality, before summing up the game as “a megamusical version of Jean-Paul Sartre.” Which brings us to *He Poo Clouds*.

“It’s a ludicrous expression of devotion,” says Pallett of the title of his forthcoming LP. “If you were to overhear someone describing a love interest... [the saying is] funny, but it’s real.” The record, however, is not a love story, but rather an ambitious concept album that (according to an email from one of the record’s promotional people) “is ostensibly about *Dungeons and Dragons*.”

“There’s neither a dungeon, nor a dragon,” corrects Pallett, while noting that the D&D connection is that each of the record’s first eight songs is based on one of the eight schools of magic from the game. Just as the religiously inclined turn to God to explain the



Photo by Davida Nemeroff

more exceptional parts of everyday life. *He Poes Clouds* draws on "illusion" and "divination" (and the six other "schools") to draw similar parallels. "It's a way of nerds quantifying a phenomenon," he explains. Owen, however, doesn't count himself among that particular group of nerds. "The whole thing is about magic, which I don't really believe in." Pallett's sentiments are echoed on "The Poeka Sings." *He Poes Clouds'* final number, which asks the question, "why are all your songs about the things that don't exist?" And with that, the album is brought full circle.

In addition to being far more thematically cohesive, and a step forward lyrically, *He Poes Clouds* is also more musically ambitious than its predecessor. While the songs were still written primarily with live performances in mind, the recordings were arranged for a string quartet and voice, with Hungarian composer Bela Bartok and Destroyer's *Year Blues* ("his only record where the musical experimentation matches up with the lyrics") cited as influences. The result is a record that, while based in very traditional classical styles, is forward-looking and original as a piece of modern popular art. It's a record that challenges, and is a result of its composer's willingness to take chances. "Someone who is a great guitar player and writes great songs and that's it, that's half-assed... there's a huge difference [between] a band that's ironic and [a band] doing something that you know may end in failure," says Pallett of his attitude towards composition and art. Describing his own creation process for *He Poes Clouds*, Pallett notes that the recording was the first time he "had worked on all four cylinders." The effort paid off.

He Poes Clouds is out on Blocks Recording Club on May 9th, while Owen expects to finally hit the West Coast for some live dates in late summer.

"Irony is shit. Irony means we can do better but we're not going to. I stopped thinking anything was ironic a long time ago."

Jolie Holland in Springtime Can Kill You



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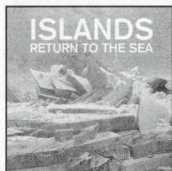
"Holland writes and sings like an old soul, with wisdom beyond her years."

- San Francisco Chronicle

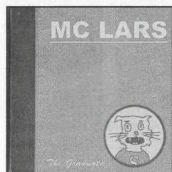
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UNDER REVIEW



Islands - Return to the Sea



MC Lars - The Graduate



Nicola Danger - Her's My Song...



Maritime - We, The Volstead



Chardmelles - A Vintage Random

Islands Return to the Sea (Equator Records)

So the other day I saw this dude with spiky hair and a donut, wearing a cut-off white t-shirt and driving a white IROC, its windows rolled down even though it was rather cold that day, just so that everyone could hear his tunes. It was, after all, the music emanating from his vehicle which had first drawn my eyes up from the pavement, as it had been years since I had heard ZZ Top's "Legs" blasted so assuredly and with so much confidence. Now, say what you will about Mr. IROC and his band o' beards, but he is consistent. And just to get something straight here, this is in no way meant as a dis, but that's more than you can say for Islands. That being said, and here's where I'll get to my point, it is their unwavering eclecticism and slacker virtuosity which makes them oh-so-endeared. That is exactly what many would have wanted from these two of three Unicorns, and their Wolf! Arcade friends. I'm willing to bet that "Humans" in particular, propelled by a marching band and carried forth by Nick Diamonds' twilight-darkened melodies, as well as "Don't Call Me Whitney, Bobby," will end up on more than a few of this summer's mix tapes (or playlists if that's your bag). The latter song's catchiness and patio lantern-approved beat will hopefully be enough for you to dance yourself into forgetting the track's unfortunate title. Or better yet, maybe you'll never know it by name, and only as that tune you made out to on the lawn of some house party just off Main St. the weekend after you finished exams.

T. Mountney

The Dresden Dolls Yes, Virginia... (Roadrunner Records)

Something happened to The Dresden Dolls since their self-titled debut from two years ago. As I listened to *Yes, Virginia...*, I felt as though something was missing. Although the same theatrical melancholy is present on both works, there is something inexplicably forgettable about this album. Amanda Palmer's vocal styling has only developed even more of a cabaret tonality since their debut. In fact, this

latest effort seems to be almost an exaggerated caricature of the last, with eyebrow-raising lyrics like "we need to chop your cock off / tick-tock, tick-tock..."

But suddenly, just what *Yes, Virginia...* was missing dawned on me—Amanda Palmer is a much better pianist now than in her early recordings. But it was the crass and unrefined quality of the Dolls' first record that gave it much of its charm. The combination of Palmer's crude perspective on piano theory and lyrical choices-ranging from the plight of the child molester ("Missed Me") to the pleasures derived from self-mutilation ("Bad Habit")—had a certain jaw-dropping tragic beauty. But there's something just inherently vanilla about *Yes, Virginia...* The newfound musicianship and recording techniques have somehow buffed out the rough edges that made their debut stand up and be noticed.

That being said, *Virginia* is not without its gems. But I would suggest you refrain from this album and wait for Amanda Palmer's collaborations with the ...*Trail of Dead* outfit for what is sure to be a bombastic kaleidoscope of epic rock.

Dan McCash

Tokyo Police Club A Lesson in Crime (Paper Bag Records)

Over startling, hyperactive drums we hear an urgent cry: "Operator! Get me the President of the World! This is an emergency!" The guitar launches in, ascending higher, faster, before the bass marches forward, handcuffed to Atari-like keyboards. It's Tokyo Police Club saying hello on the opening of their debut EP. *A Lesson in Crime*. It's also their theme song, as frontman David Monks hollers: "When you're standing near Tokyo Police Club/When you're standing next to me/Tokyo Police Club/Lost in the Pacific/Arresting you for being in love."

About as bewildering as an armed raid on your grow-op, *A Lesson in Crime* chases you through seven songs in sixteen frantic minutes. One moment you're seized and forced to dance at gunpoint, and the next you're told to lend an ear to a prophetic tale about a robot-governed future. You won't find it easy to catch your breath in

between tracks. They leave you no room to fight back, but you won't want to.

Drummer Greg Alsop holds these songs together with twitchy, mathematical, post-something-or-other beats, giving guitarist Joshua Hook a place to stand so he can play like Dick Dale if he were in *My Bloody Valentine*; blistering tremolos in an otherworldly dimension. Monks seconds as the band's bassist, but he doesn't neglect his duties on the four-string while singing. His bass lines constantly give rise to the momentum, often stealing the spotlight for a moment or two before magnetising to the drums once again.

The lyrical vision of Tokyo Police Club is of a world where "computers rule the planet" and children are slaves building spaceships at night/in the fluorescent light." But don't mistake their Terminator ethos for gloom or despair, or even any kind of social commentary. They treat their apocalyptic subject matter with the same tongue-in-cheek sensibility that makes the *Islands*' debut so strangely amusing. It's hard to think about avoiding the enslavement of our species by machines when you're busy flailing to their handclaps and screaming back to their dorky call-and-response choruses.

Smartly, they're willing to ditch their conceptual side when the songwriting calls for it. "If It Works," with a charged, thumping beat, benefits from Monks giving us a glimpse into a mortal moment: "And I wait for every meal/But I still set a place for you." It ends up being the song's most poignant lyric. After all, it's emotion that sets us apart from the machines.

The only complaint you could launch against *A Lesson in Crime* is that it falls in that wish-it-were-longer limbo with every other great EP. With an arsenal this strong, the recording is aching to be fleshed out into a proper album where they could develop their lofty concepts to an even more effective degree. One can only hope they haven't put all of their eggs in one basket. The future of humankind may depend on them.

Mike LaPointe

Vetiver To Find Me Gone (Fatcat Records)



The Dresden Dolls - Yes, Virginia...



Tokyo Police Club - A Lesson in Crime

Vetiver will appeal to fans of **Devendra Banhart**, **Will Oldham** and the whole Americana folk sound. On their latest, Vetiver proves they are the kind of band that can effortlessly play something beautiful and simple, with the kind of restraint that could burst forth at any moment. The music lies on a delicate balance of traditional and experimental sound, with enough variety between songs to keep things interesting. It may be a bit coffee shop for some, but this isn't **Jack Johnson** by any stretch. The songs are careful and avoid the commercial pull with minimal production and at times whisper quiet vocals.

Apparently the Vetiver show in March was tight, and I'm sure these guys have a sense of their sonic debts as they brought along veteran out-folk artist **Michael Hurley** on their tour to open for them. As far as folk goes, this is deep music. Music for people who contemplate waves. I mean really contemplate waves. And like get into the patterns in the carpet and stuff. This is like **Donovan Jr.**, in stereo with a gorgeous arrangement of folk rock figures and a darkness that recalls the obscure **Jackson C. Frank**. But enough musical references.

For me, Vetiver wears thin on the songs where the strings are overused, something I don't like in most recordings. Thankfully, this doesn't happen much, and it's a small and hesitant complaint on something I otherwise enjoy. *To Find Me Gone* progresses from the minimalism and simplicity of the band's debut, adding vibes, organ and electric and slide guitar. The songs are overdubbed, and rock somewhat harder than the straight-ahead folk and bluegrass of their self-titled release. The more I listen to it, the more I like the album for its calm assurance.

Arthur Krumins

The Knife Silent Shout (Rabid Records)

When we last heard from The Knife, they were donning neon jumpsuits and gifting fellow Swede **Jose Gonzalez** with their mini-hit, "Heartbeats," to be used in a commercial for the corporates. Since then, it seems as if this brother-sister duo has crawled their way into the ranks of the occult to record their third proper full-length, *Silent Shout*. **Olof Dreijer** and **Karin Dreijer**

Andersson perhaps felt that with this shift in theology they should also relocate their studio into the vaults beneath The Grand Church in Stockholm, leaving *Silent Shout* a much darker and more surrealist affair than previous outings.

Through a digital wash of aggregated synthesizers and cold, crackling rhythms, The Knife evokes tales of solitary sailors, male-bonding support groups, frightened housewives and hopeless TV addicts. What's most striking about all of this is Karin's vocals, which have been stretched and pulled and manipulated into a wide array of characters to suit the atmosphere and eccentric world of each track. At times, this can leave the listener feeling a bit squeamish, especially when her voice is lowered by several octaves and comes out sounding like **Linda Blair** in the *Exorcist*, but overall the effect is completely enthralling. With *Silent Shout*, The Knife has definitely surpassed previous accomplishments and has left us with their finest, most focused work to date.

Brock Thiesen

MC Lars The Graduate (Nettwerk Records)



MC Lars is a mama's boy.
David Ravensbergen

Ghostface Killah Fishscale Island Def Jam

What's everyone talking about these days? Mostly this guy. Sure, this is a good album, but it's not that good. It feels like most of the praise is coming from guys who just started listening to rap two years ago because they thought it was funny. Looking at the production credits this should've been the best album of



Vetiver - To Find Me Gone



The Knife - Silent Shout



Ghostface Killah - Supreme Clientele

all time. Instead, here's what you really need to know—it's not as good as *Supreme Clientele*.

Chauncey Danger

Nicolai Dunger
Here's My Song...
(Zoe Records)

Man, that voice. Nicolai Dunger, a Swede with many a talent, has recorded it once again for another little treat for the ears, on the overly-long titled *Here's My Song, You Can Have It...* I Don't Want It Anymore! Yours 4-Ever. It's a mouthful of a moniker, but perhaps appropriately so—Nicolai Dunger's vocal chords are no doubt his most valuable asset.

He is also a very capable songwriter, and his career thus far displays an interest in exploring various musical styles in his songs which mostly deal with love, loss, and yearning. His early records were fairly experimental, but with 2001's aptly-named, heartfelt *Soul Rush* came more accessible songs and notoriety, gaining numerous comparisons to **Van Morrison**. But, as if refusing to be typecast simply as a blue-eyed soul crooner, his next album, 2003's *Tranquil Isolation*, was a foray into American folk and country, in which he collaborated with no less than **Will Oldham** himself. It made for an excellent, sincere record that once again sounds much like its title implies.

Now we have *Here's My Song...*, in which Dunger has successfully blended the styles of his last two efforts into a soulful, tranquil set. And as always, his stunning vocals are at the forefront. The parallels to Morrison are still relevant, as in the upbeat "Hunger," or in the reflective "Slaves (We're Together Like)." He hasn't strayed far from his country leanings either, most clearly heard in songs like the mandolin and slide guitar-rich "Tell Me..." and the delicate waltz "Country Lane." There are also some hints of **Jeff Buckley**, as in the acoustic "White Wild Horses," a starkly affecting song, my personal favorite on the record.

As I've probably made clear, Nicolai Dunger could record almost any old song and it would sound pleasant at worst, thanks to his gift of a singing voice. But as with his previous records, *Here's My Song...* has many wonderful moments within, and shows Dunger to be a

dedicated musician and talented songwriter, always exploring and developing his craft.

Robert Ferdinand

Maritime
We, The Vehicles
(Flameshovel Records)

Everyone has those albums in their collection that they hurriedly shove under the bed when company comes around. For me, *The Promise Ring* has always been included in the aforementioned grouping, and has resulted in more than a few sessions of unrestrained mockery at many a social gathering. I always stuck up for the band for years; that is until Davey von Bohlen and Dan Didier joined Eric Axelson, the bassist of the now defunct *Dismemberment Plan*, and formed *Maritime*. Their 2004 debut, *Glass Floor*, was more than I could take. Its overly bright and hollow sound filled me with shame, and I shoved those records under the bed and that's where I thought they'd stay; at least until I heard Davey's newest submission.

To my complete and utter surprise, *Maritime*'s new album, *We, The Vehicles*, has been soaked in layer upon dense layer of pure pop-craftsmanship. I kid you not, this is by far the best thing Davey von Bohlen has done since the *Promise Ring*'s emo-boy classic *Nothing Feels Good*. Unlike *Maritime*'s last stale and monotonous offering, everything here sounds rejuvenated and full of promise. Throughout the album, stand-out tracks like "Parade of Punk Rock T-shirts" and "No One Will Remember" (which actually sounds like a stripped-down *Mice Parade* B-side) have the power of invoking grins, chills and unconscious foot tapping. The album is overflowing with an appealing variety of song ideas and instrumentation that holds your attention throughout. Like the overly optimistic voice shouts at the start of *We, The Vehicles*, "It's OK and everything is going to be fine!" I can pull those old *Promise Ring* records back out from under the bed now.

Brock Thiessen

Charalambides
A Vintage Burden
(Kranky)

As easy as it is to dismiss

Catholics for their popery, there is something about the ritual of confession that appeals to me. Not that I'd ever actually part those sacred curtains and bear my heart to a faceless and potentially predatory old man, but I like the idea of exposing my flaws and shedding masks of deceit every so often. Luckily there's the blues—music rooted in gospel but safely removed from the church—to give voice to our collective yearnings and lament the mistakes of the past. On *Charalambides*' latest offering, *A Vintage Burden*, classic blues guitar informs a modern psychedelic sensibility, exploring regret and the passage of time without the baggage of rigid song structures or religious conventions.

The album opens with a languid guitar loop, repeating itself with a barely noticeable delay each time. As the melody circles forward, Christina Carter's ethereal vocals meditate on timeless beauty, gently assuring us that "There is No End." The first track sets the tone for the remainder of the record, as the same unadorned guitar sound and vocal structures recur throughout. If you're looking for a dynamic collection of songs, you've come to the wrong place. The minimal compositions quickly fade into the background if you don't pay careful attention, but the attentive listener will find plenty of material for careful rumination. I'd like to play this album through some headphones in a pasture at dusk, watching the cows chew their cud as the gathering darkness erases their shapes.

Although it never strays from subdued reflection, *A Vintage Burden* avoids indulging in cheap melancholy. There is something irrepressibly thankful about these songs, and while there are no answers provided to the questions of love and forgiveness raised, the album leaves me with the same contented feeling as *Blind Willie Johnson*'s rendition of "Take Your Burden to the Lord and Leave it There." The record's lengthy centerpiece, "Two Birds," builds on slide flourishes and cautiously euphoric vocals, over which Carter delivers the album's most cohesive statement: "There is nothing for me to know/There is no need to struggle/But day after day/I want to know."

David Ravensbergen

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MY SXSW DIARY

Chris-a-riffic impresses easily in Austin, Texas.

Last March, Chris-a-riffic and his band, They Shoot Horses Don't They?, dropped by SXSW in Austin, Texas to play a show, check out other marching bands, and take advantage of sweet deals on parking. This is his report.

Five dollars to park for a whole day?—That enchanted land is this? It is Austin, and I put Vancouver over its knee in so many wonderful ways.

SXSW was a relentless assault on the senses. Approximately 50 clubs squished side by side stretched a mile up Austin's 6th Street. And they all had something to prove. I felt overwhelmed. And lost. And frightened. My band, They Shoot Horses, had already toured the West Coast for a week and a half and this was the highlight so far. We arrived there Thursday afternoon, a day too late for Smoosh (damn it to hell!) and The Flaming Lips' Wayne Coyne rolling down the streets in his big plastic ball (why don't you just live in that stupid thing, Wayne?).

We were the first of six bands to play at Emo's Annex (just a parking lot and a tent) as part of the Kill Rock Stars showcase. It was the first show in a while that the band was nervous about. Truth be told, the tour was kind of stinky leading up to this show. Half an hour before we went on: the place was pretty much empty. Moreover, the banks were closed and all I had was traveler's cheques. And no one would take traveler's cheques. So while I worried about all this, Emo's filled up, we had the time of our lives, the crowd liked us and bought stuff and the pressure was over. But enough about us.

The Fiery Furnaces

So I had no idea who was playing and where. I listened in on people's conversations until I had an inkling...What's that you say? The Fiery Furnaces at Stubbs? What a coup! Stubbs' back patio/messy field provided such a great setting for a kind of lame performance from the Freidbergers, as Chicago's hopeless eccentrics turned a potential bizarre masterpiece into an Aerosmith concert. "Straight Street" was barely listenable, but they did play a great version of "Chris Michaels." onward!

Erase Errata, BOYF, The Organ

I should have gone to Emo's Annex sooner. I just made it to see the last two songs, possibly ever, of San Francisco's Erase Errata. There have been rumblings of their demise for a while, so I'm really glad to have witnessed the last moments of a great band. I made my way up the street and

noticed that bands were playing everywhere, from bluegrass buckers on the side streets to rockabilly revivals on the bank steps. But the coolest by far was this band called BYOP. I believe. They were a nine-piece marching band kind of thing, but the good kind, complete with this seven foot sousaphone player that dazzled the quick-growing crowd in the middle of 6th street. I got through the crowd to the Mint showcase just in time to miss the Immaculate Machine set and see most of The Organ's first time at SXSW. It was quite good. They are always motionless onstage, but still captivating in a haunting, sit-cross-legged-on-the-floor, Lowish kind of way.

You Say Party! We Say Diet, The Gossip

It didn't take long to meet up with yet another Vancouver musician after that, as I ran into Bruce Dyck, the drummer of You Say Party! We Say Diet! I'm friends with all of those guys, but didn't see the other four anywhere because, get this, THEY WERE WATCHING TV IN THEIR HOTEL ROOM! Bruce and I managed to muscle our way into Emo's Annex one last time to see The Gossip play an amazing set. And Bruce didn't care for it. Foolish boy! I also met Carolyn Mark for the first time. She's a nice lady.

Clap Your Hands Say Yeah, Polysics, Run Chico Run

Brace yourselves now: Friday in Austin was remarkable. I started light, hearing Clap Your Hands Say Yeah play their last album exactly, note for note. I met up with Bruce again, and he and I went to Zero Degrees to see Polysics from Japan. I've never seen Bruce so subdued. He's usually so uppity, but for their whole set he was glued to the floor, fixating on the four-piece decked in bright yellow zero-ish jump suits. They tore through their 40 minute set without breathing once. Victoria's Run Chico Run had to climb onstage after that, and this brings me to one big problem at SXSW—the problem of following excellent shows, 80% of the packed room filtered out to see lesser bands. Bullshit! Can the Chico's get a fucking break? Matt and Tom fight so hard, and for what? Their sets are always great. See them whenever you can. Buy their new album.

Ariel Pink, Störsvett Nix Noltes, Brian Jonestown

Massacre, Lame DJ

No Arctic Monkeys for this fellow. I was off to the Fox And Hound to catch the freak show known as Ariel Pink, and I'm glad I went early. A nine-piece band known as Störsvett Nix Noltes astonished us all by playing prog-rock with classical instruments. Sounds lame but it was great. The centerpiece was their gorgeous cello player, who played every abstract part with precision, all the while contorting wildly in her chair and maintaining a big smile throughout.

Ariel Pink is known for his throat of playing live. For most of his set, he crouched down with his ear to his monitor, out of the sight of the amazingly patient crowd. He was rude to the sound man, he ignored the fans and he was a complete dick to his soon-to-be-former bandmates. The amazing thing was that the shitty quality of his albums was almost duplicated live. Don't ask me how. It was a 9 out of 10. The night was so young yet—Jonestown, baby! I always found Anton Newcombe and the Brian Jonestown Massacre to be insanely overrated, but I would have spat at the bouncer if I wasn't let in. It was everything I wanted, though perhaps not what Anton would have wished for, that poor man. His bassist and drummer were stuck at the airport, so he had to enlist the help of hipsters off the street. They began the show with a twenty minute jam that kind of went nowhere but we all loved it. Anton threw out a drunk girl and slammed a randy fan for screaming "Shave your chest!" My friend Robb and I left early but the rest of the Horses filled me in on the subsequent drama. Anton wouldn't leave the stage, the cad! I believe it was Mr. Newcombe that said, "You don't stop the jam until the jam is done." The best part was when he finally left this lame DJ got on the mic and started getting the crowd excited for a possible encore. Then the SXSW promoters stormed out and screamed "What the hell are you doing? We just spent 15 minutes getting him to leave!"

Quintrón And Miss Pussygcat, Peaches

Next up was Louisiana's Quintrón and Miss Pussygcat on a cramped upstairs balcony, and it was one of the best shows I have ever seen. They were loud and sweaty and sexy, and Quintrón's bass-heavy organ was decked out like a Buick,

complete with working headlights. Thank heavens people screamed for an encore because they came back out with Canadian sexpot Peaches, and they rocked Kiss's "God of Thunder" back and forth all night long. Legendary.

Notekillers, Pink Mountaintops, I Love You But I've Chosen Darkness

Three great shows on my cool down-day. My friend Luke got me into this 80's no-wave instrumental band called Notekillers, playing on the same stage Quintrón rocked the night before. It was pretty great but they didn't play "The Zipper," an instrumental tune that rivals "Telstar" and "Spanish Flea".

Then we were off to Emo's Annex again, where most of They Shoot Horses Don't They stood in line to see the Pink Mountaintops. We were the first in line but kept getting passed by corporate stuffs with their precious laminates. This is my other complaint: we didn't pay to get in to any of the shows and neither did the laminate people. The people that had to pay were the least respected of the patrons, which is criminal. They should get carte blanche but they don't. So everyone in line pretty much leaves except me and a few others, crying out for revolution. One of the SXSW guys recognized me, and ushered me around the back. But I got my comeuppance, and the chants of "scab" and "sellout" from those I left in the line still hurt. Pink Mountaintops finished a great set, then I Love You But I've Chosen Darkness played and were pretty bad upon my first listen. I left after one song.

The Dirty Projectors

The last show I saw in Austin before we played the worst show of our lives in Houston was pretty great. While everyone bugged off to see Choséa Killah perform 30 second snippets of his tunes, I went across the street to see a virtuosic four-piece called The Dirty Projectors. Their talent on their instruments was mind-boggling. I have never heard such odd and wonderful four-part harmony in my life. The sucking thing was that I was incredibly tired and left before they were done. If there's one thing I learned from SXSW, it's that I'm just not 30 anymore.

Illustration by Zoë Alexander

CITR CHARTS!

Strictly the dopest hits of April

CITR's charts reflect what has been spun on the air for the previous month. Rekkids with stars mean they come from this great land o' ours. Most of these platters can be found at finer (read: independent) music stores across Vancouver. If you can't find 'em there give the Muzak Coordinator a shout at 604-822-8733. His name is Luke. If you ask nicely he'll tell you how to git 'em. To find out other great campus/community radio charts check out www.earshot-online.com.

#	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	The Doers*	Whatcha Doin'?	Red Cat
2	Run Chico Run*	Slow Action	Boompal!
3	Neko Case	Fox Confessor Brings the Flood	Mint
4	Pink Mountaintops*	Axis of Evil	Jagiagwuar/Scratch
5	They Shoot Horses Don't They?*	Boo Hoo Hoo Boo	Kill Rock Stars
6	Quasi	When the Going Gets Dark	Touch & Go
7	The Stills*	Without Feathers	Vice
8	Islands*	Return to the Sea	Equator
9	Yeah Yeah Yeahs	Show Your Bones	Interscope
10	V/A	See You On the Moon!	Paper Bag
11	Magneta Lane*	Dancing With Daggers	Paper Bag
12	Windows 78*	The Window Seat	Submerged
13	Stereolab	Fab Four Suture	Too Pure
14	Cocoteau Twins	Lullabies to Violaine	4AD
15	Destroyer*	Destroyer's Rubies	Merge
16	Blood Meridian*	Soldiers of Christ	Outside
17	The Buttless Chaps*	Where Night Holds Light	Mint
18	Ivan Hrvatska*	Seasons of Love (Party All Year)	Pro Am
19	The Flaming Lips	At War With the Mystics	Warner
20	Cadence Weapon*	Breaking Kayfabe	Upper Class
21	Gnarls Barkley	Selections From St. Elsewhere	Downtown/Atlantic
22	Mecca Normal*	The Observer	Kill Rock Stars
23	Danielson	Ships	Secretly Canadian
24	Built to Spill	You In Reverse	Warner

#	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
25	International Falls*	The Plateau	Independent
26	The Go! Team	Audio Assault Couse: The College Radio Sessions	Columbia
27	Liars	Drums Not Dead	Mute
28	The Robocop Kraus	They Think They Are...	Epitaph
29	The Concretes	In Colour	EMI
30	Mogwai	Mr. Beast	Mataador
31	Femme Generation*	Brothers and Sisters, Alone We Explode	Permafrost
32	Boris	Pink	Southern Lord
33	Jackie-O Motherfucker	Flags of the Sacred Heart	ATP
34	Stephin Meritt	Showtunes	Nonesuch
35	The Illuminatti*	Cheap Powers	Rectangle
36	The Buzzcocks	Flat Pack Philosophy	True North
37	The Capricorns	Pure Magical Love	Paroxysm
38	V/A	Idol Tryouts Vol. 2	Ghostly International
39	Billy and the Lost Boys*	Yet Why Not Say What Happened	Lost
40	Paper Moon*	Broken Hearts Break Faster Everyday	Endearing
41	Sparks	Hello Young Lovers	In The Red
42	Hayseed Dixie	Hot Piece of Grass	True North
43	Sonic Youth	S/T EP (re-issue)	DGC
44	Man Man	Six Demon Bag	Ace Fu
45	Pretty Girls Make Graves	Elan Vital	Mataador
46	The Black Angels	Passover	Light In The Attic
47	Drive-By Truckers	A Blessing and a Curse	New West
48	Clit 45	2, 4, 6, 8...	BYO
49	The Just Barleys	Top	Dead Burn
50	The Subways	Young for Eternity	Reprise

* Denotes Canadian Content

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CITR 101.9 FM PROGRAM GUIDE

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	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6am	BBC	BBC	PACIFIC PICKIN'	BBC	BBC	BBC	BBC
7am	TANA RADIO	BREAKFAST WITH THE BROWNS	HIGHBRED VOICES	SUBURBAN JUNGLE	END OF THE WORLD NEWS	CUTE BAND ALERT!	THE SATURDAY EDGE
8am	SHOOKSHOOK						
9am							
10am	AFROBEAT	LIONS AND TIGERS AND BEARS...	THIRD TIME'S THE CHARM	WRAPPED IN SILVER SOUND	SWEET 'N' HOT	SKA-T'S SCENIC DRIVE	
11am							
12pm	THE ROCKERS SHOW	ALT. RADIO	MORNING AFTER SHOW	ANOUZE	FILL-IN	THESE ARE THE BREAKS	GENERATION ANNIHILATION
1pm							
2pm							
3pm	BLOOD ON THE SADDLE	LET'S GET BAKED	FILL-IN	FILL-IN	WE ALL FALL DOWN	THESE ARE THE BREAKS	POWERCHORD
4pm	FILL-IN	NATIVE SOLIDARITY NEWS	REAL TO REAL CAREER FAST TRACK EN AVANT LA MUSIQUE	DEMOCRACY NOW	INKSTUDS	RADIO ZERO	CODE BLUE
5pm	CHIPS WITH EVERYTHING	CITR NEWS W.L.N.G.S.	WENER'S BBQ	RUMBLETONE RADIO A GO GO	MY SCIENCE PROJECT	NEWS 101	LEO RAMIREZ SHOW
6pm	QUEER FM	SON OF NITE UNCOMMON PRACTICE	FLEX YOUR HEAD	NECESSARY VOICES	PEDAL REVOLUTION	THE CANADIAN WAY	OUR WAVE
7pm					NUTHOUSE RADIO THEATRE		SHADOW JUGGLERS
8pm	RHYTHMSINDIA	WIGFLUX RADIO	SALARIO MINIMO	ANDY POWERS SOMETIMES WHY JUICEBOX	THE SONIC SOCIETY	AFRICAN RHYTHMS	PLANET LOVETRON
9pm				BLUE MONDAY			
10pm	TRANSCENDANCE	THE JAZZ SHOW	PLUTONIUM NIGHTS	FOLK OASIS	EXQUISITE CORPSE	AFRICAN RHYTHMS	SHADOW JUGGLERS
11pm			CAUGHT IN THE RED	HANS KLOSS' MISERY HOUR	LAUGH TRACKS	IN THE SHADOWS	BEATS FROM THE BASEMENT
12am		VENGEANCE IS MINE	AURAL TENTACLES				
1am							
2am	BBC	BBC		BBC	BBC	THE VAMPIRE'S BALL	BBC
3am							
4am							
5am							

SUNDAY

AFROBEAT (World)

In two hours, I take the listener for a spin—musically—around the world; my passion is African music and music from the Diaspora. Afrobeat is where you can catch up on the latest in the "World Music" scene and reminisce on the classic collections. Don't miss it. <myafrobeat@yahoo.com>

THE ROCKERS SHOW (Reggae)
Reggae inna all styles and fashion.
BLOOD ON THE SADDLE (Roots)
Real cowhit-caught-in-yer-boots country.

CHIPS WITH EVERYTHING (Pop)
British pop music from all decades. International pop (Japanese, French, Swedish, British, US, etc.), 60s soundtracks and lounge. Book your jet-set holiday now!

QUEER FM (Talk)
Dedicated to the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transsexual com-

munities of Vancouver. Lots of human interest features, background on current issues, and great music.

RHYTHMSINDIA (World)
Rhythmsindia features a wide range of music from India, including popular music from the 1930s to the present, classical music, semi-classical music such as Ghazals and Bhajans, and also Qawwalis, pop, and regional language numbers.

TRANSCENDANCE (Dance)
Join us in practicing the ancient art of rising above common thought and ideas as your host DJ Smiley Mike lays down the latest trance cuts to propel us into the domain of the mystical.

<trancendance@hotmail.com>

MONDAY

BREAKFAST WITH THE BROWNS (Eclectic)

Your favourite Brown-sters, James and Peter, offer a survey blend of the familiar and exotic in a blend of aural delight!

LIONS AND TIGERS AND BEARS... (Eclectic)
A mix of indie pop, indie rock, and pseudo underground hip hop, with your host, Jorde Sparkle.

ALT. RADIO (Talk)
Hosted by David B.
PARTS UNKNOWN (Pop)
Underground pop for the minuses with the occasional interview with your host, Chris.

LET'S GET BAKED w/MATT & DWE (Eclectic)
Vegan baking with "rock stars" like Sharp Like Knives, Whitley Houston, The Novaks and more.

NATIVE SOLIDARITY NEWS (Talk)
A national radio service and part of an international network of information and action in support of indigenous peoples' survival and dignity. We are all volunteers

committed to promoting Native self-determination, culturally, economically, spiritually and otherwise. The show is self-sufficient, without government or corporate funding.

W.L.N.G.S. (Talk)
Womens International News Gathering Service.

SON OF NITE DREAMS (Eclectic)
UNCOMMON PRACTICE (Classical)
WIGFLUX RADIO (Reggae)
Listen to Selecta Krystabelle for your reggae education.

THE JAZZ SHOW (Jazz)
Vancouver's longest running primetime jazz program. Hosted by the ever-savvy, Gavin Walker.

May 1: "Tom Cat" was an obscure and previously rare recording by trumpeter extraordinary Lee Morgan with an all-star cast including pianist McCoy Tyner and also saxophone master Jackie McLean and drummer Art Blakey. Look Out!

May 8: Tonight we celebrate the birthday of "The First Lady of Jazz" (Born 1910 and died May 28, 1981), pianist/composer Mary-Lou Williams with a fine, modern (Mary always kept up with the times) album of originals called "Zoning".
May 15: One of bassist/composer Charles Mingus' last great recorded statements is tonight's feature... "Cumbia and Jazz Fusion". His quintet is expanded by some great guests and a second extended work is some fine music for a film called "Todo Mondo"... great late period Mingus.

May 22: "The Welterweight Champion of the Tenor Saxophone" was Hank Mobley. Mobley was every bit as strong as Rollins and Coltrane and he proves it on tonight's classic called "Workout". Mr. Mobley with guitarist Grant Green and powerhouse drummer "Philly Joe" Jones and others. Tonight

cooks!

May 29: Vibist and musical genius Bobby Hutcherson is coming to this year's Jazz Festival and tonight you will get an idea of his greatness in a quartet album called "Oblique". Bobby with pianist Herbie Hancock, the late bassist with powerful chops, Albert Stinson and drummer/composer Joe Chambers. Bobby's what it's at!

VENGEANCE IS MINE (Punk)
All the best of the world of punk has to offer, in the wee hours of the morn.

TUESDAY

PACIFIC PICKIN' (Roots)
Bluegrass, old-time music, and its derivatives with Arthur and "The Lovely Andrea" Berman.
HIGHBRED VOICES (World)
THIRD TIME'S A CHARM (Rock)
Open your ears and prepare for a

shock! A harmless note may make you a fan! Hear the menacing scourage that is Rock and Roll Deadlier than the most dangerous criminal!

<borninixynine@hotmail.com>
MORNING AFTER SHOW (Eclectic)
REEL TO REAL (Talk)

Movie reviews and criticism.
EN AVANT LA MUSIQUE (French)
 En Avant La Musique! se concentre sur le m tissage des genres musicaux au sein d'une francophonie ouverte   tous les courants. This program focuses on cross-cultural music and its influence on mostly Francophone musicians.

WENIE'S BARBEQUE (Sports)
 Join the sports department for their coverage of the T-Birds.

FLEX YOUR HEAD (Hardcore)
 Up the punx, down the emo! Keepin' it real since 1989, yo, Flexyourhead.

SALARIO MINIMO (World)
 Salario Minimo, the best rock in Spanish show in Canada.

CAUGHT IN THE RED (Rock)
 Trawling the trash heap of over 50 years worth of rock 'n' roll debris. Dig it!

AURAL TENTACLES (Eclectic)
 It could be punk, ethno, global, trance, spoken word, rock, the unusual and the weird, or it could be something different. Hosted by DJ Pierre.

WEDNESDAY

SUBURBAN JUNGLE (Eclectic)
WRAPPED IN SILVER SOUND (Eclectic)

JulieCo., just playin' what I know best (or is it the only thing I know?) - indie rock!

ANOLIZE (Noise)
 Luke Meat irritates and educates through musical deconstruction. Recommended for the strong.

DEMOCRACY NOW (Talk)
 Independent news hosted by award-winning journalists Amy Goodman and Juan Gonzalez.

RUMBLETONE RADIO (Rock)
 Primitive, fuzzed-out garage mayhem!

MOTORDADDY (Rock)
 Cycle-riffic rawk and roll!

NECESSARY VOICES (Talk)
 Socio-political, environmental activist news and spoken word with some music too.

AND SOMETIMES WHY (Pop/Eclectic)

First Wednesday of every month.
BLUE MONDAY (Goth/Industrial)
 Vancouver's only industrial-electronic-retro-goth program. Music to schtopp to, hosted by Coreen.

JUICEBOX (Talk)
 Developing your relational and individual sexual health, expressing diversity, celebrating queerness, and encouraging pleasure at all stages. Sexuality educators Julia and Alix will quest your search for responsible, progressive sexuality

over your life span!
 <www.juiceboxradio.com>
OPEN SECRETS (Talk)

FOLK OASIS (Roots)
 Two hours of eclectic roots music. Don't own any Birkenstocks? Allergic to patchouli? C'mon in! A kambaya-free zone since 1997.

HANS KLOSS' MISERY HOUR (Hans Kloss)
 This is pretty much the best thing on radio.

THURSDAY

END OF THE WORLD NEWS (Eclectic)

SWNET 'N' HOT (Jazz)
 Sweet dance music and hot jazz from the 1920s, 30s, and 40s.

ALL WE FALL DOWN (Eclectic)
 Punk rock, indie pop, and whatever else I deem worthy. Hosted by a closet nerd.

RHYMES & REASONS (Hip Hop)
MY SCIENCE PROJECT (Talk)

Zoom a little zoom on the My Science project rocket ship, piloted by your host, Julia, as we navigate eccentric, under-exposed, always relevant and plainly cool scientific research, technology, and poetry (submissions welcome).
 <myscienceprojectradio@yahoo.ca>

PEDAL REVOLUTION (Talk)

NUTHOUSE RADIO THEATRE (Drama)

All-original Canadian radio drama and performance art written and performed live-to-air by our very own team of playwrights and voice actors. We also welcome you to get involved, whether you are professional or inexperienced...

EXQUISITE CORPSE (Experimental)
 Experimental, radio-art, sound collage, field recordings, etc. Recommended for the insane.

LIVE FROM THUNDERBIRD RADIO HELL (Live Music)

Live From Thunderbird Radio Hell showcases local talent...LIVE! Honestly, don't even ask about the technical side of this.

May 4th Big Red Sun

May 11th The Mutators/The Levitans

May 18th The Robosexuals

May 25th Hot Lots

LAUGH TRACKS (Talk)

FRIDAY

CUTE BAND ALERT! (Eclectic)
SKA-T'S SCENIC DRIVE (Ska)

Email requests to: djska_t@hotmail.com

THESE ARE THE BREAKS (Hip Hop)
 Top notch crate digger DJ Avi Shack mixes underground hip hop, old school classics, and original breaks.

RADIO ZERO (Eclectic)

NARDVUAR THE HUMAN SERPENT PRESENTS (Nardvuar)
NEWS 101 (Talk)

A volunteer-produced, student and community newscast featuring news, sports and arts. Reports by people like

you. "Become the Media."
THE CANADIAN WAY (Eclectic)

Independent Canadian music from almost every genre imaginable covering the east coast to the left coast and all points in between. Yes, even Montr al!

<thecanadianway@popstar.com>

AFRICAN RHYTHMS (World)
 David "Love" Jones brings you the best new and old jazz, soul, Latin, samba, bossa and African music from around the world.

<www.africanrhythmsradio.com>
PLANET LOVETRON (Dance/Electronic)

Music inspired by Chocolate Thunder, Robert Robot drops electro past and present, hip hop and intergalactic funkmanShip.

<robertrobot@gmail.com>

IN THE SHADOWS (Hip Hop)

I LIKE THE SCRIBBLES (Eclectic)
 Beats mixed with audio from old films and clips from the internet.

10% discount for callers who are certified insane. Hosted by Chris D.

THE VAMPIRE'S BALL (Goth/Industrial/Metal)

Dark, sinister music to soothe and/or move the Dragon's soul. Hosted by Drake.

<thevampiresball@yahoo.ca>

SATURDAY

THE SATURDAY EDGE (Roots)

Studio guests, new releases, British comedy sketches, folk music calendar, and ticket giveaways.

GENERATION ANNIHILATION (Punk)
 A fine mix of streetpunk and old school hardcore backed by band interviews, guest speakers, and social commentary.

<www.streetpunkradio.com>
 <crashburnradio@yahoo.ca>

POWERCHORD (Metal)

Vancouver's only true metal show; local demo tapes, imports, and other rarities. Gerald Rattlehead, Dwayne, and Metal Ron do the damage.

CODE BLUE (Blues)

From backwoods delta low-down slide to urban harp honks, blues, and blues roots with your hosts Jim, Andy and Paul.

THE GEO RAMIREZ SHOW (World)

The best of music, news, sports, and commentary from around the local and international Latin American communities.

OUR WAVE (World)

News, arts, entertainment and music for the Russian community, local and abroad.

SHADOW JUGGLERS (Dance/Electronic)

An exciting chug of Drum 'n' Bass with DJs Jimungie & Bias on the ones and twos, plus guests. Listen for give-aways every week. Keep feelin da beat.

SYNAPTIC SUNDWICH (Dance/Electronic/Eclectic)

BEATS FROM THE BASEMENT (Hip Hop)

THE HIGHLIGHT

Cute Band Alert! featuring Zena Shurman

How did you get into college radio? Where did you broadcast before coming to CITR?

I got my start in 2000 at CHRW, the campus radio station at the University of Western Ontario. I co-hosted an indie music show at CHRW for about a year and a half, and also produced a four-part series on the history of the music scene in London, Ontario. When I moved to Vancouver in 2001, I became a programmer at CJSE, SFU's campus station. I hosted my show "Cute Band Alert!" for four years until I left CJSE in August 2005. I'm now a PhD student at UBC, so moving my show to CITR seemed like the logical thing to do. I'll be resurrecting "Cute Band Alert!" at CITR this May, which I'm very excited about.

You recently filled in for Chris-a-riffic. How did it feel to fill such big shoes?

It was fun! Filling in for Chris-a-riffic gave me the chance to get back on the air after about 6 months of not hosting a radio show. It made me realize how much I missed hosting "Cute Band Alert!"

What kind of musical discoveries have you made as a programmer that you wouldn't have otherwise found out about?

Too many to count! Hosting campus radio shows has given me the opportunity to hear bands or musical genres that I might not otherwise have come across. Those discoveries are sometimes accidental—you might play an album just because the cover art looks cool and end up loving the band—but they often grow out of the community that tends to develop at campus stations. Follow programmers or listeners have alerted me to a lot of great music, which is one benefit of the uniquely interactive nature of campus radio. Sometimes, campus radio also gives you the opportunity to find out about an up-and-coming band before most people do. For example, I discovered The Constantines because their lead singer used to be the music director at CHRW. We would play their demo on our radio show and I would go to their shows at the small local club. The last time I saw them play at Richard's, the club was packed and everybody was singing along to their songs. It's been really exciting to watch such a talented band achieve so much success over the years.

Who's making waves in indie pop right now? What's your favourite record of 2006 so far?

Lately I've been obsessively listening to Neko Case's new album *Fox Confessor Brings the Flood*. She's one of my favourite artists, and I can't get enough of her sultry twang. I also really like the self-titled EP recently released by Montreal's Kicker. I'm looking forward to hearing more from Lo-Fi-FNK, because I think their music would make for a pretty summer soundtrack.

THE QUICK AND THE DIRTY

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